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*Tros Tyriusque mihi nullo discrimine agetur*

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# *The North American Review*

VOLUME 239

JANUARY, 1935

NUMBER I



## Apéritif

### *Paging Mr. Robin Hood*

THE *Times* of December 1 announces a prize of \$7,500 offered jointly by J. B. Lippincott Company and *Mystery Magazine* of New York, and George G. Harrap & Company and the *Daily Mail* of London, said prize to be paid to the writer who introduces to them by May 31, 1935, a dishonest fiction personality worthy of "taking place among the great lovable crook characters of all time." This charming criminal must be embodied in a novel of from 70,000 to 100,000 words.

Whether the publishers calculated the fact or not, their announcement comes at a fortunate time, particularly in this country. A tremendous effort has been made in the last year or two to topple the criminal from his usual favored place in our social scheme, and regardless of the degree of effectiveness of that effort, it is only right that the other side should be heard. Public enemies have been hunted down and shot or imprisoned; bankers have been exposed in all their perfidy to the angry eye of the multitude; bootleggers have been deprived of a goodly share of their means

of livelihood; and political grafters have been turned out of office. It is true that in a great many cases one set of political grafters is merely replaced by another; that bootleggers still control something like half of the liquor trade; that incompetent bankers do not suffer from the shame of exposure to the same extent as their depositors; and that public enemies still abound in the land. But the effect of the great effort to thwart all these is to lower them in the public esteem, and any believer in the virtues of free speech will readily admit that they deserve to have their side of the case put in its best light. That a charming personality may furnish more effective arguments than a thousand learned volumes would not be denied just now by the highest authority in our land, and so these publishers are to be congratulated on their perspicacity and high-mindedness.

But what sort of character should this charming criminal be? One thing certain is that his activities should be directed against the rich and have at least the partial effect of aiding the poor. Robin Hood was of this ilk, and though it may be difficult for the novelist to make his readers believe in the exist-



ence today of enough rich men to keep the lovable crook busy and in pocket money, still he will do well not to forget the example of that noble-hearted brigand, for the contemporary reader can hardly be impressed favorably by a hero who holds up cigar stores or operates a bucket shop to the detriment of widows and orphans. Too many readers are apt to have suffered from just such operations.

Perhaps the ideal sphere of activity would be among the hidden assets of those formerly great financiers who have crashed during the past five years and bankrupted hundreds of thousands of simple citizens who had had unquestioning faith in their genius and integrity. One of the advantages of this sphere is that the engaging rogue would be forced to do a considerable amount of traveling in far lands, and thus be in the way of falling into more romantic adventures than would be possible in a prosaic homeland. More practically, he would be under far less danger of arrest, for fallen financiers must be reasonably quiet about hidden assets, even when some one else steals them. And of course, since there is nothing that tickles a sucker's fancy more than to have his swindler victimized, such a criminal would obviously have the makings of a great popular figure.

In the matter of personal characteristics the novelist could hardly fail to instil in his hero a kindness to animals and an abiding respect for his mother. These things, together with boldness and immense ingenuity in getting out of scrapes, are elemental. But it would be advisable not to emphasize the quickness of his trigger-finger, since a good many people believe that there has been wide-spread overemphasis on the quickness of trigger-fingers in America, and

elsewhere for that matter. A sound second-story technique is undoubtedly better.

The religious forces of our country have risen up to purge the movies and other artistic media of indecency, therefore it would probably be wise at this time to deal cautiously with the moral character of the hero—that is, aside from his attitude toward other persons' property. It is true that many lovable rogues have had a way with the ladies, but that sort of thing might endanger the hero's popularity in these days. He should be slightly rakish, no doubt, to flutter the hearts of elderly ladies, but he ought to express the characteristic with a good deal of care. He might take a cocktail in the sixth chapter and kiss his boyhood sweetheart under the mistletoe on Christmas Eve; but though these may be slim materials with which to make a devil of a fellow, the novelist had better not go much further. Also, when he has succeeded in purloining the major share of fallen financiers' hidden assets and distributed them to the poor, retaining a fair percentage as a nest egg, he should certainly reform and marry his boyhood sweetheart. That will justify the kiss under the mistletoe on Christmas Eve and mark a happy consummation of his heroic, single-handed effort toward redistribution of the national wealth.

As for the hero's personal appearance, it would be nice to make him tall, dark and handsome, but there is a danger here too. A practical monopoly of these attractions has been held lately by movie stars and prize fighters, and in a lovable crook character of 1935 they would smack of commercialism when what is needed is a national hero of pure altruism (less ten or fifteen per cent of the proceeds for a nest egg). A

short, stocky figure of a man, with sandy hair and a slight wen would be a wiser choice.

While plot details must necessarily be left to the novelist, we can perhaps be forgiven for offering a bit of advice concerning the climax. It must, of course, be in a courtroom. The hero, through some complicated series of events or another, quite outside his control, is finally brought to trial. There is a vast ballyhoo over the event, since even in the novel its hero is a national character. Movie cameras, broadcasting apparatus, reporters and the cream of the country's sob sisters jam the courtroom, together with a crowd of notables who have strained every influential string to get in.

The hero, of course, has overwhelming popular support, but the majesty of the law—even its letter—must be upheld, and the public appreciates this too. Thus we have a tremendous dramatic conflict. Which will be victorious, the lovable man with his human failings but essential feeling for justice, or the cold inhuman law?

The prosecution sets forth the hero's legal crimes and demands its pound of flesh, quite in accordance with its official duty. Then comes the defense. Technical discussion of the crimes droops along endlessly. No one understands it. But finally the lawyers get down to realities. They describe the hero's painful early life, his struggle against a harsh world. They call in character witnesses, some of them just possibly in the hero's debt one way or another, who affirm his high principles and testify to his kindness and generosity, which, some say, have reduced his fortunes to the point where he has a bare eighteen dollars a week on which to subsist. It is altogether an affecting picture that they paint, and

many among the spectators are seen to dab at their eyes with handkerchiefs. If there were only a midget handy to place on his lap the jury would not even bother to leave the courtroom.

But there is not, and after the prosecution has done everything it can to bring the jury to its way of thinking, the defense is forced to play its final card. It proclaims in resounding periods that if the defendant has done anything out of the way—which, mind you, it is not at all willing to admit—his offenses were no more than honest errors of judgment. And who among us is ready to set himself up as infallible?

The jury files out and the issue hangs in the balance. Tense hours pass. At long last the jury returns and the verdict is read. The defense's last card has turned the trick: not guilty! But the more serious newspapers interpret the decision as a public realization that so many others were attempting to redistribute the national wealth by various methods at the time of the hero's offenses that it would not be fair to single him out for punishment: hence the acquittal.

With the hero's reform and marriage, the novel ends on an idyllic note, and every one should be pleased.

These advices and comments are offered in a spirit of unselfishness, with no strings attached. Whether the four publishers mentioned above would pay their \$7,500 for a novel based on them is conjectural, to say the least. For ourselves we already have chosen a favorite criminal character, and his charm is not at all fictional. The gentleman referred to is Mr. Alphonse Capone, whose subscription to *THE NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW* was gratefully received last week.



*Dundonald's Destroyer*

In the November issue, 1914, during the early part of the War, Colonel George Harvey wrote an editorial on Dundonald's Destroyer, which has a tantalizing interest for the reader of today.

Thomas Cochrane, tenth Earl of Dundonald, a man of tremendous energy and ability, with a variety of experience including a prison term as well as great renown, in the year 1811 proposed to the British government the device which Colonel Harvey apostrophized in these words: "What was the invention of that extraordinary genius which would infallibly enable one belligerent to annihilate another at a stroke, but which would be so appalling in its results that the British Government would not 'shock humanity' by employing it, but kept and still keeps it shut and sealed securely away from the knowledge of fighting men?"

Dundonald at the time was out of favor with the government, but nevertheless a secret committee was appointed to investigate his invention, a committee of such distinguished and authoritative minds as the Duke of York, Admirals Lords Keith and Exmouth, who were among the most competent officers of the navy, and the two Congreve brothers, one of whom, Sir William, invented a military rocket and other military and industrial appliances of great value. These men came to the conclusion that Dundonald's Destroyer was all that he claimed, that it would make England invulnerable on the attack or the defense; but they strongly advised against using it on the grounds that it was altogether too devastating. The government accepted their rec-

ommendation and Dundonald left England after promising solemnly not to disclose his device to other countries nor to use it or permit it to be used anywhere except in behalf of England.

In 1846, when there were fears of trouble with France, Dundonald again brought his device to the government's attention and again a committee, equally distinguished and authoritative, investigated it and affirmed the first committee's findings, with the additional comment—which bore out Dundonald's own statement—that the first use of the Destroyer would reveal its nature so fully to the world that other nations would be able to use it against England. Dundonald said later it was so simple that it could easily have been employed by the rebels in the Indian Mutiny against the English, had it been known to them. Thus it was necessary to use it fully for the immediate destruction of an opponent, and the government, for humanitarian reasons, was unwilling to wreak such havoc even against an enemy. The thing was not tried.

Twice again, during the Crimean War, Dundonald proposed his Destroyer, with the same result each time. He died in 1860 before another war gave him a further opportunity to test it. The archives of the British Admiralty are supposed to contain an account of it, but even that is not certain. Colonel Harvey said: "It may be that the essential details of it perished with its inventor." But no one, according to Harvey, had ever been able to contradict the astonishing claims of Dundonald, that the device "would not merely defeat, but actually destroy, annihilate, sweep out of existence, any hostile force against which it might be directed." That was



up until the first months of the World War.

A fascinating speculation now is whether any of the horrible implements used in the War stemmed from Donald's Destroyer. That is, if we can believe the testimony of those eminent scientists and military men who examined it and maintained that it would do things even worse than those accomplished by poison gas, depth bombs, high explosives, airplanes and the rest of the grim paraphernalia that so thoroughly failed to win any profit for the combatants. The three things known about the character of the Destroyer, as Colonel Harvey listed them, were that it could be used against navies, armies, or fortresses, on land or sea; that it was very simple; that its application and means of operation were so obvious that any one seeing it used once would know all about it and be able to use it. These characteristics seem to eliminate as possibilities all the gruesome inventions that were first used or perfected during the War, but it is hard to believe that any one of the combatant nations would have hesitated to bring forth such a device for fear of "shocking humanity" in that enlightened period—if it really worked. The skeptic immediately protests that that is the point: the Destroyer was just another death ray, of no actual value. But the testimony to the contrary is hard to ignore, and a mystery remains.

The British Admiralty would do us a great favor by clearing it up.

### *Change*

Early in March, 1931, the National Economic League sent out a list labeled "Paramount Problems of the United States for 1931" which makes queer and nostalgic reading today.

The problems were listed according to their importance. Our almost forgotten friend, "Prohibition," headed the list, and way down in last place (fifty-fourth) was "Governmental Principles and Policies"—which is almost a complete reversal of position. In those days not only "Prohibition," but "Administration of Justice" and "Lawlessness, Disrespect for Law," came before "Unemployment." "Socialism, Communism" was in nineteenth place and "Individual Liberty" in thirtieth. "Finance, Banking, Currency, Credit" was practically ignored—in forty-fourth place; "Stabilization of the Value of Money" was in forty-second. But "Reconsideration of War Debts" was quite prominent, in fourteenth place—well above "Old Age Pensions and Insurance" and "Relations between Labor and Capital" and "Public Utilities."

All of which seems very odd today. Almost the only listings which would seem normal and familiar now are those old cronies, "Political Corruption" and "Tariff," neatly paired in twelfth and thirteenth places. And whatever juggling is done with the other problems during the next four years, we may feel comfortably certain that these two at least will remain close to where they were in 1931 and are in 1935. W. A. D.



# Wanted: More Edisons

BY WILLIAM TRUFANT FOSTER

*Despite a strong defeatist pressure to reduce wealth by curtailing production, hope is gaining that we may yet learn to use our full productive and inventive capacity*

WHAT is the aim of the Roosevelt New Dealers? What, for that matter, is the aim of all the other friends of the Forgotten Man, who would like to get hold of the cards and show us how the game should be played? They have one aim in common: a higher standard of living for the people as a whole. It is true that "economic security" was the subject of the President's Conference in Washington last month and the theme of the President's own address. But all the speakers called for economic security on a higher plane than this nation, or any other nation, has yet reached.

What, then, in the economic sense, is a higher standard of living? It is nothing but increased per capita consumption of goods. When we say, and say correctly, that the standard of living of wage earners in manufacturing pursuits, in the United States, rose thirty-four per cent between 1914 and 1926, what do we mean? We mean that wage earners consumed that much more wealth. We mean that for every three oranges, suits, radios, magazines, rugs and all the rest, considered as a whole, which the average wage earner con-

sumed in 1914, he consumed four in 1926. We mean that and nothing else. Increased per capita consumption of goods is a higher standard of living.

How, then, can we consume more, year after year? Only by producing more. We can not eat cabbages which have never been grown, or wear cloth which has never been spun. Here, at least, is something in the highly controversial and confusing realm of economics concerning which there is no disagreement. On this platform, shoulder to shoulder, stand the American Federation of Labor and the United States Chamber of Commerce, the Roosevelt New Dealers and the National Liberty League. Even the Daughters of the American Revolution and the American Legion do not, in defense of our liberties, take arms against this proposition. They agree even with Soviet Russia.

How, then, can we produce more wealth year after year? Not by producing less. And if at this point the impatient reader concludes that he is reading nothing but the platitudinous elaboration of the obvious, let him review our recent national efforts to at-

tain a higher consumption of wealth by producing less wealth. The destruction of farm products is merely the most obvious of these efforts. Equally effective in reducing the means of providing a higher standard of living is the limitation of hours of our most efficient machinery, under the codes, in order to enable certain producers to use less efficient machinery, and the union rules in so far as they prevent workers from doing as much work per hour as they could readily and gladly do. Toward the same defeatist objective is the proposed thirty-hour week. And now come serious proposals, in one form or another, for putting a moratorium on inventions. The arch enemy of the common man in the past generation, it seems, was Thomas A. Edison.

All this clearly is nonsense. There are only two conceivable ways of lifting the standard of living of the rank and file of our people. One is to take income away from the rich and give it to the rest of the population. The other way is to increase the total income. The first way does not take us far. Even if the Government took the total income of all persons receiving over \$5,000 in the current year and distributed this income among the rest of us, we should still be far worse off than we were a few years ago. Let us say much the same thing in another way. If the two per cent of the income receivers at the top of the scale were forced to consume far less than they are now consuming, and the consumable goods thus made available were distributed evenly among the other ninety-eight per cent of the population, the gains would scarcely be perceptible. This is not an argument against a more equitable distribution of income; it is merely a fact which we should bear in mind in order to guard against dis-

appointment. The appropriation of the incomes of the rich would only slightly benefit the rest of us, even if the process did not reduce the national income by discouraging initiative, industry and risk-taking. Undoubtedly, however, the immediate effect would be a reduction of the total volume of production and a consequent lowering of the standard of living of the people as a whole. In any event, the only way substantially to increase the material good things of life for all of us is to produce more.

## II

But why should we go on forever producing more and more—things, things, and still more things—until our higher aspirations are deadened by an avalanche of things? At the height of our prosperity, André Siegfried, in *America Comes of Age*, expressed the fear that Americans were becoming "thing-minded"; that as human beings they were becoming spiritually submerged. Since that time we have succeeded in reducing our annual output of things by many billions, but comparative poverty does not seem to have brought spiritual blessings. To be a human being, it is necessary to be a consumer; and American consumers have never found their idealism blighted by the assurance of three square meals a day. Idealism persists, if at all, not on undernourishment, but in spite of it. The best centres for developing individuality are well nurtured, well housed and well clothed human beings. The application of results of scientific research to the production of material wealth in the United States has greatly increased the proportion of such human beings. Its goal must be to make any other kind unknown.

In any event, the labor union advo-



cates of the thirty-hour week are not seeking spiritual growth; nor is that the objective of those capitalists who insist in the codes on limitation of machine hours. As a matter of fact, many of those who are urging measures which would reduce the production of wealth would be the first to rebel against the new order when they discovered that it left them materially on a lower standard of living.

Even as a permanent solution of the problem of unemployment, the thirty-hour bill that is urged upon the new Congress is not convincing. If that is the way to abolish unemployment, why has it not been abolished? A generation ago, the ten-hour day was common and the twelve-hour day was not uncommon. Then, for most workers, came shorter hours and fewer days of labor per week. But shortening the hours of labor did not shorten the bread lines. The era of shortest labor hours was followed by the era of longest relief rolls.

Leisure is not legal tender. We can not eat it, or wear it, or use it for shelter. If we could, ten million of our men and women would now be rolling in wealth. They have nothing *but* leisure. No, we can not raise our standard of living by forcing the thirty-hour week upon industry, until we find some way of transmuting leisure into goods and the wherewithal to buy goods.

In this connection, Henry Ford has done much to mislead us. "An extra day of leisure," he says "is going to bring large results, for the people will have time to expand their sense of need, and therefore will increase their consumption." Most of us can not follow this line of reasoning. Our sense of need has already expanded beyond our incomes. We have plenty of time to spend all the money we have, and plenty of

unsatisfied wants. We can not get far in the market-place with free time. In any event—to return to our main thesis—we can not collectively buy twice as much as we produce. Workers with a thirty-hour week will spend more money than workers with a forty-hour week if they have more money to spend. Otherwise they will not. The people as a whole will enjoy a higher standard of living with fewer hours of work, if they produce more wealth in fewer hours than they could produce in more hours. Otherwise they will not. A shorter working week may well come—probably will come—as a *reward for good business management*, including full utilization of new inventions. That means gaining ground. But a shorter working day, forced upon the country by law at this time, as a *penalty for bad management*, would mean losing ground. It would reduce our standard of living.

### III

The new Congress will be asked to pass other laws which are designed, whether their sponsors know it or not, to lower our standard of living. The cry is still, "There ought to be a law!" Among the proposed laws are several which, directly or indirectly, tend to prevent the full use in industry of new inventions. But it is no use trying to outlaw all labor-saving devices. Even if we spent our entire time making laws, we could not keep up with inventors. Nobody knows where they will break out next with a device which makes two men idle where only one was idle before. Yesterday it was in the cotton mills. Today it is in the paint shops. Tomorrow it may be almost anywhere. For centuries the world has been trying in vain to stop these scientists—ridicul-

ing them, excommunicating them, exiling them, burning them at the stake. The author of Ecclesiastes even tried to end their troublesome activities by writing poetry about them. "This only have I found," he sang sadly, "that God made men upright; but they have sought out inventions."

Back in the Sixteenth Century, Copernicus, Kepler and Galileo ran clear by all the "stop" signals of their day. Somebody had to go ahead before there could be any telephones, or radios, or airplanes—before there could be a Thomas A. Edison. After all, there is something to be said for these scientists. They have brought within the reach of the common people of today more comfort and security and health and music—yes and means of spiritual growth—than ever the kings and queens of old enjoyed.

Certainly, "there ought to be a law." And there *is* a law. Here it is: the surest way to keep down standards of living is to keep down scientists.

For many years we have been hearing men exclaim in dismay, "How can we possibly find a huge new industry to do as much for the next generation as the automobile industry has done for our generation?" Science will tell us the answer unless we refuse to listen. We have not yet learned, as Edison said, one-millionth part of what there is to learn.

Our chemical industries have the vigor and daring and promise of youth. While old industries have been drowsing by the fireside, the chemical industries have brought out cellophane, new plastics and synthetic building materials, created largely out of waste. They have shown us how easy it is to tear down ten million obsolete dwellings and build ten million which are fit for

this age of science. Farmers may soon build straw houses; that is, houses made of synthetic lumber, compounded of straw. It may still be true that we can not make bricks without straw. But we can make houses without bricks—if we have plenty of straw.

To find a new industry to do for us what the automobile industry has done, we need only take any train out of any large American city, any day, and look out the window. Dirty, shabby shacks in ugly huddles! Why not tear them down and build new ones with our surplus men and materials and money? Science has already provided the wrecking machinery. Potentially, the home-building industry is ten times as great a stimulus to trade and employment as the automobile industry ever was. It has not yet written the first chapter of its Book of Genesis.

The bespectacled chemist, messing about in the laboratory, may at any moment hit upon another profitable use for mountains of waste. He may turn corn-husks into silk. He may even challenge the pig's squeal as a symbol of waste's irreducible minimum. Any day may come a discovery which will create another entirely new industry. All through the ages, chemists have tried to find out how to turn the baser metals into gold. They may never find out: there may be no such thing as the philosopher's stone. Still, in a very real sense, "thar's gold in them thar test-tubes."

Edison has been quoted on almost every conceivable subject, but he has never been quoted as saying that you can't do anything. No true scientist ever talks that way. The man who first said, "You can't get blood from a turnip," was not a scientist. A scientist would have contented himself with the cau-



tious statement: "As far as we now know, no process has yet been discovered by which to extract blood from turnips"; implying, in his open-minded way, that any morning we might see the headline, "Humble Turnip Gives Pint of Vital Fluid: Saves Life of Prominent Citizen."

Silly? Not necessarily so. The blood-and-turnip tradition started only by chance. Its author, casting around for a picturesque phrase to denote impossibility, might have snorted: "You can't get rubber out of golden-rod." But now you *can*. Edison saw to that.

Science never yawns and calls it a day. Any one who still has a pet "impossibility" would do well to chloroform it and have it stuffed. For as soon as science and business hunt in pairs, it will be shot to pieces anyway. Even the "Impossibility-of-Abolishing-Poverty."

#### IV

The New American, says Henry Adams, "will be a kind of god, compared with any other human being that ever lived." He will be the child of incalculable coal power, chemical power, radiating energy and forces of the atom yet to be utilized. "Every American, in the year 2,000," says Mr. Adams, "will think in complexities unimaginable to the era of John Adams." To him the Nineteenth Century will seem on the same low plane as the Fourth Century, and equally childlike. From the time of John Adams to the time of Theodore Roosevelt, the advance of science was faster and faster. Indeed, as Henry Adams sees it, in every ten years of that period the gain in man's control over the forces of nature was at least twice as great as the gain in the previous ten years. Since 1900, progress has been still faster.

Arithmetic can not measure the rate: it requires algebra and geometry.

That this New American, dramatically portrayed by Henry Adams, is within the realms of scientific possibility, every scientist knows. The only question is whether bankers and business men and politicians can keep pace with bacteriologists, chemists and physicists. The end of poverty is not the chimerical goal it is supposed to be by the scornors of "the new era." Scientists have already made it possible for us to create enough material wealth to abolish want. Our chief trouble is that we have not yet discovered how to distribute the wealth.

It is scarcely more than a generation ago that men began building "horseless carriages." Theirs was the vision, the energy, the faith that moved mountains of discouragement. No matter what they proposed to do, they were told that it could not be done. As soon as their business actually did get under way, the poor prophets of failure, whom we have always with us, declared that the business was about to collapse. Always it was about to collapse. And always, always, the saturation point was just around the corner. Nothing daunted, the pioneers went blithely on, seizing new ideas, pouring money into research, scrapping new machines and installing better ones, until they more than trebled the output per man hour, and gave us a highly complicated and amazingly efficient piece of machinery, at a lower cost per pound than a tub of butter.

How much progress would the automobile industry have made if it had depended on government initiative? Even under private initiative, how fast would it have developed if the Federal Government had endeavored to keep

all the little inefficient production units in operation by limiting machine hours, by retarding the use of new inventions and by trying to keep up prices through code agreements?

Thanks largely to Edison and the researches of men inspired by him, an unknown something now flows, in some unknown way, precisely where man wants it to flow. And behold, age-old burdens are lifted from the backs of those who labor and are heavy laden! At this moment a single workman, sitting in a clean, quiet room before an instrument board, reaches out his arm, turns a few small switches, and makes Niagara Falls illuminate a hundred cities and run the wheels of a thousand factories. The average American workman today has, in effect, a hundred slaves working for him incessantly. Thus he has a large measure of freedom from human slavery, achieved by enslaving the forces of nature. Rightly we honor the great inventor.

But we can honor him with something better than commemorative exercises. A thousand Niagara Falls, or their equivalent in power, are still running to waste. A thousand potential power stations lie hidden in the bowels of the earth. Ten times ten hundred thousand willing workers have no work to do. Still there are millions on the farms who have not yet achieved the luxury of a single incandescent light. Yes, we need more Edisons. But their inventions will do little for industry and employment as long as we cling to the notion that the way to have more wealth is to produce less.

# V

Plainly, we could produce more wealth if we could sell it. Plainly, we could sell it if the people who want it

had the money wherewith to buy it. Nobody need get a headache over economic textbooks in an effort to understand that: he need do nothing more than consult his own experience. Even the recent Report of "The National Survey of Potential Product Capacity" tells him nothing new. The American people have, indeed, as the Report says, long submitted to privation "which could have been eliminated at any time" if we had not failed to utilize so large a part of our production facilities. Even in 1929, as the recent painstaking study of the Brookings Institution shows, there were wasted productive facilities up to at least twenty per cent. At present, the waste is nearer fifty per cent. This means that we could double the average real income of the people, if we could enable them to buy our potential output.

But, we are told, there is a fallacy in this reasoning. The *New York Times* editorially expresses the common objection:

"There is a difference between the potential or indicated horsepower of a gasoline engine and its actual horsepower. Given an engine with a certain stroke, bore, &c., it is possible to figure the potential horsepower on the assumption that no energy is lost in friction or passive resistance. But it is pointless to say that the horsepower would be such and such if it were a larger engine. This is precisely what the N. S. P. P. C. does in the economic field. It says, in effect, that the national production could be doubled if the national purchasing power were doubled. But it overlooks that these are simply two names for the same thing: both mean the national income."

Here we have the usual juggling of terms. There is a national income in



dollars and also a national income in goods. It is true that we can not, on any given day, substantially increase the national income in goods by increasing the national income in dollars. But during the next twelve months, let us say, we could increase the demand for goods by increasing the national income in dollars; and increased demand for goods, as long as millions of willing workers had no work, would certainly increase the production of goods. It would therefore increase the national income in terms of goods.

The problem is financial. The chief reason why we do not keep up with our Edisons is that our financing of consumption does not long keep up with our financing of production. This is the only sense in which we ever have a "general overproduction of goods." We never produce more goods as a whole than we want; merely more than we can buy. For a plethora of goods there are only two cures: one is reduced production; the other is increased consumption. The treatment which is always prescribed by the economic doctors of despair is reduced production. It is the medicine we take, willy-nilly, once a depression gets under way, as long as we rely on the rugged individualism of the practitioners. They belong to the blood-letting school. But as soon as we act collectively for the common good, we choose the other cure: we speed up consumption instead of slowing down production. To do that we have to place the control of the total volume of currency and credit in the hands of Federal agents who are determined to raise our standard of living.

Lately we have been moving in that direction. The former Governor of the Federal Reserve Board, Eugene R. Black, said in 1930: "I do not agree with

those men who are saying that in America there must be no retrogression from the present high grade of living. . . . We have been living in an automobile, a Frigidaire, a radio era, and have been sitting in the atmosphere of a Corona-Corona. We can not pay our debts and continue in that atmosphere. Let us not fool ourselves." Since 1930, we have followed defeatists of that school of thought. We have substantially reduced our standard of living by purchasing—hence by producing—fewer automobiles, radios, Frigidaires, Corona-Coronas and goods in general. Inevitably we have thereby reduced our capacity to pay our debts.

Now, in the appointment of Mariner C. Eccles as Governor of the Federal Reserve Board, we have made a right-about-face. Even in 1929, Mr. Eccles says, our people did not have the high standard of living to which the material wealth of this country entitled them. We can lift our standard of living at once, he insists, through bold, prompt use of our surplus currency and bank credit; we can do collectively, he says, what business men can not do individually. He is not worrying, as his predecessors worried, about the immediate balancing of the budget. The deficit will disappear, he is convinced, as soon as we use our new inventions and idle monetary resources in the increased production of wealth.

It is not an accident that we now have as the head of our Federal Reserve System a man who thus turns his back on the economics of despair. As a matter of fact, it was Mr. Eccles's statement of these very convictions before the Finance Committee of the Senate, in February, 1933, which brought him to the attention of the Administration. "We have a complete economic plant,"



he said to the Committee, "able to supply a superabundance not only of all the necessities of our people, but the comforts and luxuries as well. Our problem, then, becomes one purely of distribution. This can be brought about only by providing purchasing power sufficiently adequate to enable the people to obtain the consumption goods which we, as a nation, are able to produce. The economic system can serve no other purpose and expect to survive."

"We need bold and courageous leadership," Mr. Eccles continued, "more than at any other time in our history, for the reason that our industrial evolution has made necessary a new economic philosophy. . . . We must think in terms of the scientific, technological, interdependent machine age. . . . We hear demands for increased economies in every field, both public and private, which can only make for further distress and unemployment and less buying power. . . . It is incomprehensible that the people of this country should very much longer stupidly continue to suffer the wastes, the bread lines, the suicides and the despair, and be forced to die, steal, or accept a miserable pit-

tance in the form of charity which they resent, and properly resent. We shall either adopt a plan which will meet this situation under capitalism, or a plan will be adopted for us which will operate without capitalism."

Thus it is clear that, for the first time in the history of the Federal Reserve Board, we have as its Governor, and in full accord with the Treasury, a practical, extraordinarily successful banker who scorns the idea that the way to increase our wealth is to decrease it; who is convinced that all we need do to lift the standard of living of our people above any level hitherto achieved is, through collective leadership, to enable the people to buy the increased goods which they eagerly want, and which they are perfectly willing and able to produce. In short, we now have at the head of our banking system a man who boldly and clearly proclaims an economic philosophy which has hitherto been expounded only by a few pioneers whom the orthodox bankers and the orthodox economists have done their best to discredit. Perhaps, after all, we shall utilize the inventions of our future Edisons.



# Is Inflation Possible?

BY RICHARD A. LESTER

*Who takes the almost unique position that it is not—at least for the near future*

I'VE just been talking with a friend of mine. He is a classicist by trade and a good one too, whereas I'm only a mediocre economist. He has been telling me all about that topic of the hour, inflation. He confesses he isn't too sure just what inflation is, but nevertheless he is certain that we are going to have some of it before long. The assurance with which he asserted and reiterated this opinion reminded me of our financial writers and those consulting economists who peddle their prejudices and guesses dressed up in esoteric patter for fat fees.

My classical friend is not singular in his naïve notions. The whole country—Wall Street, Washington and Podunk—for some strange reason is convinced that inflation is around the corner if not already in our midst. Small-fry financiers and stock-market dabblers talk glibly about continentals, shin-plasters, greenbacks, assignats, as well as the post-War inflation of the mark, the franc, the lira and the crown. Regardless of which way the market goes, inflation seems to be the pet answer of those wizards who compose copy for the financial pages. If bonds fall, it is due to the fear of inflation; if stocks fall, ditto; if bonds rise, the rumor is that people

were buying in anticipation of inflation; if stocks rise, ditto. As a result, confusion is further confounded.

Such confusion and contradiction mean prosperity to the Wall-Street consulting-economist crowd who are called in to "advise" corpulent vice-presidents. Inflation to the boys who supply bewildered business executives with the "cold dope" on how to avoid its evil effects—how to ride on top of the inflationary tide—pays handsome profits. No wonder inflation is their theme song. Meanwhile unheard-of underlings in Washington write reports on inflation which compete with detective stories for the spare time of the New Dealers; bankers and economists spend their idle hours figuring the extent to which our currency could be inflated; and those few swivel-chair executives of large corporations who have more than a sheepskin to show for four years spent within "cloistered walls" may be seen spending evenings poring over strange books chock-full of charts, now and then thumbing in the *Wörterbücher* by their sides.

What a lot of fun and also how funny! Everybody believes that we are in for a "dangerous" inflation and there is hardly a chance of it. The inflation

fad may inflate the ego and pocketbooks of certain so-called economists, but the probability that prices will soar skyward is next to nil.

## II

The burden of proof for inflation rests upon those economic wiseacres who use big words, like equilibrium and confidence, as though they really knew what they were talking about. These viewers-with-alarm say that inflation is sure to pay us an extended visit and they point to the so-called lessons of the past. Let them look to their lessons. Let them offer up from "the accumulated experience of the ages" just one single instance of an inflation that occurred during times of peace and when one-fourth of the working population of a country was unemployed. The simple answer is that there is no such case on record. All the well-known inflations occurred in connection with wars and by accident rather than intent. No inflation that was an inflation ever took place when a country was in the depths of a severe depression.

Let us turn for a moment to the history books. When our forefathers used the phrase "not worth a continental" they referred to the paper money which our Continental Congress began to print in 1775, within a week after the Battle of Bunker Hill. The Colonies, since they had no borrowing credit abroad and no banking system nor national currency, were forced to finance the Revolutionary War by issuing continental currency. No wonder continentals by 1780 had depreciated until butter cost \$12 a pound and corn \$150 a bushel. And take note of the conditions under which inflation occurred: war, no national monetary system and a brand new currency issue.

Ten years later another revolution, this time the French Revolution, was financed by the printing of a paper money called assignats because they were based on an assignment of title to certain church lands recently seized by the state. But again it is important to observe that, although the issue of assignats began in December, 1789, there was little depreciation until after the monarchy was overthrown and France had declared war upon Austria and Prussia (1791). Then followed a declaration of war with England in 1792, Civil War in 1793 and a Reign of Terror, until by 1796 the assignats were practically worthless. Throughout this period of wholesale warfare, supplies were so reduced that the fear of starvation was ever present. No wonder prices rose by leaps and bounds. With a reduction in the products to be purchased, prices would have risen even without the printing of assignats. As S. E. Harris says in his book on *The Assignats*, "an explanation of depreciation without a consideration of the curtailment of production and circulation of products, is of doubtful value." Again note the conditions: continual warfare, unstable governments and a brand new money based on land values.

Compared with the assignat inflation at the end of the Eighteenth Century the ascent of prices caused by the issue of greenback currency during our Civil War (1861-1864) was mild indeed. The purchasing power of greenbacks fell but fifty per cent during that period, a change relatively no greater than the increase in the purchasing power of our dollar from 1930 to 1933. Again the exigency of war forced an increase in the amount of currency issued at the very time that a part of the country's working force was withdrawn from



production to engage in destruction.

The World War and post-War currency experience of European countries is so recent that there is no need to elaborate on it at great length. The reader may recall that the crown and the mark, currencies of the defeated countries, fell farther and farther in value until, in 1922 and 1923 respectively, they became so worthless that it took thousands and even millions of them to buy a box of matches. The lira and the franc had fallen to about one-sixth of their pre-War value by 1920 and were eventually stabilized at that figure. The pound never lost much of its purchasing power relative to that of the dollar during the War and regained its old par with the dollar in 1925. This is worth remembering since England is the only other nation that uses modern cheque-book money (bank cheques) to an extent at all comparable to its use in this country.

### III

Now prices may rise either as a result of an increase in the amount of money in use or of a decrease in the supply of goods exchanged. During a war the scarcity of goods is due to a lack of productive capacity. This is not true in times of peace and depression. Under such circumstances any advance in prices causes production to pick up immediately and this increase in the supply of products for sale acts as an automatic check to any further rise in price. The new money is put to work buying a larger volume of goods. So long as some people are unemployed and some factories are not operating at full blast, runaway inflation is impossible, since any additional money will be offset and absorbed by increased trade. Idle men and idle plants exert a heavy downward pressure on prices.

In this country, as in England, most payments are made by cheque. In fact, normally ninety per cent of all our bills are paid by pen money (cheques) and only ten per cent by pocket money (cash and currency). On the other hand, during the Civil War in this country and in France, Germany and Austria during the World War most payments were made by currency. Since Federal money is of such slight importance in our present economy, it is obvious that, so long as bankers refuse to lend freely and eye the budget with undue alarm, inflation will probably continue to be an interesting subject for conversation but never an actuality.

Furthermore, increases in cheque-book money normally initiate changes in Federal money and not *vice versa*. The customary order of events is: increased bank borrowing, increased bank deposits, increased demand for currency and cash. To anticipate an inflation without inflation in bank money is to expect the tail to wag the dog. So long as the bankers have the jitters and won't or can't lend on a wholesale scale, the rest of us need lose little sleep. With currency playing such a passive and minor rôle, billions of dollars of Federal money would have to be pumped into circulation before prices could be pushed up to any appreciable extent.

That, in part, is the correct answer to those skeptics who say, "Yes, but how about the budget?" Most of these people didn't know until recently that we had a budget. As a matter of fact, the importance of the budget, like Mark Twain's death, has been grossly exaggerated. An unbalanced budget may speed up inflation, but it requires more than an unbalanced budget to initiate a good-sized inflation, as the reader will readily understand if he recalls our

brief perusal of the history books. And in none of the instances of inflation that we reviewed, let me add, did the bankers carry on a campaign of passive resistance to inflation. Quite the contrary, they added fat to the fire.

Whether our bankers are correct in their fears of the effects of inflation on the banking business is another question and somewhat irrelevant. The important fact is that the bankers are afraid and that their fears cause them to sit tight on their money. So long as they refuse to lend freely inflation is practically impossible. Some evidence from previous inflations indicates that their fears are largely unfounded, that banks are fairly immune from most of the vicissitudes of inflation. Bankers are middlemen dealing in fixed money promises; their assets and liabilities are equally affected by changes in the value of money. And in so far as a bank's assets consist of stocks or bad bonds, to that extent it might even gain by a rapidly-rising price level.

It is strange. In this country the bankers cry out against inflation and the farmers cry for it, yet there is no evidence from previous inflationary experience to prove that the farmer's fortune varies directly with the price level. On the contrary, farmers have usually suffered from inflation. The professors at least are intelligent in their opposition to inflationary policies, for even though the cost of living goes up they must make the same old income do. Perhaps that helps to explain why they are so prone to sign ponderous petitions condemning recent monetary policies.

#### IV

A year ago the "trend of events" was "in the direction of dangerous inflation." This October "there are develop-

ing conditions and movements which point definitely toward dangerous inflation." A recent petition, signed by fifty-three economists goes on to discuss in detail these "dangerous tendencies," which may include the incoming Congress. Before the election our humble petitioners said that unless "level-headed, sound money" men were elected to the next Congress, this country might "be plunged into an orgy of currency inflation which will culminate in disaster." The answer in the vernacular is, "Where have I heard that before?"

It may be hard to stop an inflation, but it is a sight harder to start one under certain conditions. President Hoover tried to boost the figure for bank debt (or credit) outstanding. President Roosevelt has followed in his predecessor's footsteps. Unlike a Federal money inflation, a bank money inflation (an increase in the debts people owe to the banks) apparently is not "unhealthy and dangerous"—at least not to a banker. But to the layman it would seem, to use a Smithian wisecrack, that no matter who does the slicing it would still be a baloney dollar.

Repeated attempts to bring about an expansion in bank debt or deposits by an increase in bank borrowing have proved flat failures. What reason then is there to expect that attempts to expand Federal money will meet with immediate and "disastrous" success? The talk of Congressmen is cheap and, though that is all it takes to scare a banker, it takes more than talk to start a "dangerous" inflation during a severe depression. Those who point to the monetary powers granted to the President and think that they have thereby proved an inflation imminent are practicing the simplest sort of self-deception.



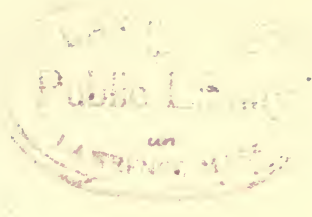
Those who go further and attempt to estimate the theoretical maximum inflation possible on the basis of present laws and existing credit conditions (one professor has published a guess of 150 billion dollars) might just as well spend their time figuring out how many forefathers they have.

So that there will be no misunderstanding, let me say right here that I am not trying to defend or excuse the many asinine monetary policies concocted by this Administration. The gold purchase plan of Professor G. F. Warren may have caused more gold to be dug out of the ground to be reburied in the vaults of the Federal Reserve Banks or the Treasury; but to expect that frequent changes in the price the government pays for gold would affect directly the price level of a country off the gold standard was to expose a vast ignorance of the workings of our monetary mechanism. And the silver purchase programme is about on a par with the gold purchase programme. As one professor has said, the Government might just as well purchase scrap iron as silver for reserve to back our money unless we are to have a silver, a bi-metallic or a symmetallic standard. Silver doesn't help a country to stay on

the gold standard nor to settle foreign balances with gold standard countries. In fact, the purchase of scrap iron for reserve behind Federal money would probably have been preferable, since it would not have had such evil effects upon the price level and economy of China.

There are, I admit, limits to the extent to which stupidity may have free rein without very definite "disastrous" results. Nothing is fool-proof, not even a New Deal. In these "Happy Days" anything is possible. But we are far from the edge of that proverbial precipice conjured up by those monetary "experts" who mount the rostrums. Although "disastrous" inflation is possible, the probability that it will arrive with next week's wash or even with the advent of spring is extremely remote. Millions of idle men and billions of dollars' worth of idle equipment are a safe guarantee that prices will not sprout wings overnight or during the cold weather. Those anti-inflationists who would warn us against the coming American inflation remind one of the accident that was looking for something to happen. Inflation may be the stuff of their dreams but actually it is very nearly out of the question.





# More Fodder for Photomaniacs

BY WILLIAM E. BERCHTOLD

*New techniques in picture gathering and dissemination seem destined to effect wide changes in American newspapers*

NEWSPAPER editors are coming to realize, not without alarm in some quarters, that the nation of headline scanners to whom they have been catering is fast becoming a nation of "photomaniacs." That's the not too complimentary term applied to the new generation of newspaper readers who get their news chiefly from news-pictures, partially from headlines and to a minor degree from the printed word of the type column. Recognition of the "photomaniac"—and we must get a less derisive term for him, since he is likely to be with us in increasing numbers for many years to come—not only forecasts a radical change in the character and make-up of the daily newspaper, but is already evident in the renewed warfare between the several newsreel producers for news "beats," in the quick acceptance of such "photo-books" as *The First World War* and *Metropolis*, and in the plans of several publishers to turn out such works as a history of the United States in pictures, a story of 1934 in newsphotos and others.

Americans have long been the most news-hungry people on the face of the earth. Not even the depression has curbed to any marked extent their will-

ingness to hand out from two to five cents each morning and evening for the world's most perishable commodity, the day's news. The three major news services—the Associated Press, United Press and International News Service—spend \$25,000,000 annually to indulge the American appetite for telegraphic news alone. This insatiable hunger for news has been conditioned only by the reader's increasingly insistent demand that his reading shall not interfere with his running. The newspaper headline, the tabloid, the newsmagazine, the newsreel and radio news flashes all have evolved from this demand for news and more news—but in increasingly compact capsule form.

Many editors now recognize, not without considerable reluctance, that a really good newsphoto—packed with dramatic action—is far greater as a circulation asset than the best written and most dramatic word picture which might be presented by a reporter. But not many newsphotos in the past have been of such high excellence, nor could the reader who prefers to get his news through pictures rely wholly on newsphotos, because the written stories of distant events usually arrived days or weeks before the pictures. But with the

advent of 1935, thirty-nine newspapers in the United States are prepared to present newsphotos of major events with the same speed that they print the written telegraphic account. This is made possible through a new national telephoto network set up by the Associated Press to serve subscribing member papers with pictures by wire. The \$1,000,000 annual cost of this service will give values approximating those of old masters to the year's most important news-pictures. Like most innovations in the newspaper publishing field, it has been greeted favorably only by a small and aggressive group of metropolitan dailies and has been damned with vehemence by many whose stature in the Fourth Estate is unquestioned and whose past policies have made them huge profits. Nearly all agree that it will radically alter the character of the daily newspaper and make significant changes in the reading habits of millions of Americans.

## II

Illustrations—drawings, cartoons or photographs—were once marks of rank sensationalism. It has taken the press a long time to remove its early inhibitions to the illustration. *Harper's Weekly* caused quite a stir in the publishing field in 1857 when it announced: "The proprietors beg to state that they will be happy to receive sketches or photographic pictures of striking scenes, important events, and to pay liberally for such as they may use." Thomas Nast's "unwritten editorials" in *Harper's* once caused William Marcy Tweed to shout: "Let's stop them damn pictures. I don't care what the papers write about me—my constituents can't read. But—damn it—they can see pictures." The cartoon or "unwritten editorial"

was not adopted by any daily newspaper until 1884, when the *New York World* took up the feature which had previously been the special province of the weekly magazine. *Harper's Weekly*, *Leslie's Weekly* and the old *Police Gazette* were the popular picture papers until the daily newspaper of the Pulitzer and Hearst schools of sensationalism entered the news-picture field, after photo-engraving had become a commercial certainty in 1890. News photography as we know it today was really born along with Mr. Hearst's creation of the "streamer" headline during the Spanish American War. The "streamer" is no longer considered a mark of sensationalism, but many editors hesitate to publish photographs on gruesome subjects which they consider quite proper to handle with the most harrowing details in the news columns written by reporters.

But it is not on the grounds of fears for a new wave of sensationalism that certain publishers object to the new \$1,000,000 service which will wire photos as quickly as the written word. That old champion of sensationalism, William Randolph Hearst, is to be found on the side of the objectors. So is Roy W. Howard, head of the Scripps-Howard Newspapers and United Press. And Adolph Ochs, publisher of the conservative *New York Times*, is "not interested." Their objections, varying from the vehement attacks of Mr. Hearst and his counsel, John F. Neylan, to the passive resistance of Mr. Ochs, are economic. They picture the publishers as being saddled with an annual expense running into millions of dollars to indulge the whims of the "photomaniac." If Colonel Robert R. McCormick, that stalwart champion of a free press in America who publishes



the Chicago *Tribune*, had not found merit in the AP's new wired-photo service and signed up for it, he might have given Messrs. Hearst, Howard and Ochs a platform on which to oppose the new service as an abridgment of the newspapers' constitutional rights to freedom of the press. It was Colonel McCormick, you may recall, who argued that "freedom of the press can be abridged by anything that unreasonably raises the cost of production or unreasonably decreases the return from publishing." But this new evil could not be blamed on the NRA or circuitous attempts of the New Deal to shackle the press.

It was the American Telephone and Telegraph Company which originally developed the telephoto process and offered it as a public service several years ago, connecting eight major cities in the United States. The four news-photo services—the Associated Press, Hearst's International News Service, the Scripps-Howard-affiliated Acme Pictures and Och's Times Wide World—used the telephoto service for pictures of outstanding importance. But the results left a good deal to be desired by the editors receiving the photographs and commercial clients using the service apparently experienced no better results, so the American Telephone and Telegraph Company discontinued its telephoto service in June, 1933, with a loss of \$2,800,000 inscribed in red on its books.

The utility company's engineers went back to their laboratories and developed a new machine, which was offered for sale or rental to each of the newsphoto services. It was turned down by Mr. Hearst, Mr. Howard and Mr. Ochs, but Mr. Cooper of The Associated Press saw in it the realization of

an old ambition to coördinate news told in pictures with news told in words. The new machine could transmit a photograph seven by nine inches to newspapers in all parts of the country simultaneously in seven minutes, which is about half the time required to send a news story of 1,000 words. What was more: the new machine could transmit pictures which, in many instances, defied detection from the original. It meant the end of confused rushing of photographs to meet train and plane schedules. It meant a ten-fold stepping up of news values in photographs, for even the finest newsphoto suffered by being printed in a distant newspaper a day, two days or a week after the story had been told in words. Mr. Cooper sent his newsphoto editor, Norris A. Huse, to visit two score editors and publishers in all parts of the country. His itinerary did not happen to include papers affiliated with Mr. Hearst, Mr. Howard or Mr. Ochs, who operate the three picture services competing with the Associated Press. The first to sign up was the Baltimore *Sun*, which was the first newspaper in the United States to have a telegraph wire strung into its office. Thirty-five other papers joined the *Sun's* company, underwrote the entire cost of the service with the understanding that as other member papers subscribed their share would be prorated. Mr. Cooper had achieved something of a *coup de maître*.

But when news of the plan trickled into the offices of the competing photo services, old wounds in the three-cornered fight between Hearst, Scripps-Howard and the Associated Press—wounds which had been healed by several years of unusually friendly relations—were reopened. Mr. Neylan, counsel for Mr. Hearst, shattered the

formal quiet of the 1934 annual meeting of the Associated Press with a demand that the matter of a rumored telephoto service be brought before the members for immediate discussion. While some Hearst and Scripps-Howard papers are members of the Associated Press, not all have acquired membership. Through their several memberships, however, both have a powerful voice in the affairs of this non-profit, coöperative organization for the collection and dissemination of telegraphic news. Mr. Hearst's counsel called for a plebiscite on the issue, knowing that in the AP's membership rolls of 1,335 papers it was quite likely that smaller newspapers without engraving plants would vote against the new telephoto service and thereby block their bigger competitors from using the service. Following a day of heated discussion, a "resolution of confidence" in the AP management was passed; and Mr. Neylan's call for an amendment requiring a plebiscite failed, nineteen to ninety-five. Because less than ten per cent of the membership were present at the meeting, both Mr. Hearst and Mr. Howard have attempted to reopen the matter several times during the last several months in a final attempt to halt what they consider an "economically unfeasible" service.

### III

The installation of the new machines in thirty-nine newspaper offices was completed and test photographs were pulsating over 10,000 miles of leased telephone wires in the United States during the late fall of 1934. The equipment is in readiness to make 1935 a news-picture year in the evolution of the daily newspaper and satisfy the fondest dreams of readers who prefer

pictures caught on a photographic lens to those painted in words by a reporter. I have examined some of the test photographs sent between Los Angeles and New York, Cleveland and New York, New York and Washington and other points on the 10,000 miles circuit. While it is possible through careful attention to intricacies of detail to identify the reproductions from the originals, the reproductions are of a high quality and sometimes better suited for newspaper photo-engraving than the originals themselves. There can be no justification on the basis of this evidence for the claim of the objectors that the utility barons have sold a laboratory abortion for a fancy price to an unsuspecting press association management.

There is little doubt that within a year or two all newspapers that can afford this costly device for receiving and sending photographs by wire will be equipped with it. Colonel Frank Knox, publisher of the *Chicago Daily News*, who stood with Mr. Hearst's representative in opposing the service at the AP meeting in 1934, has recognized the force of competition which he would face against the *Chicago Tribune* and *Chicago Times*, with the result that the *Daily News* is among the thirty-nine newspapers which will originate the service. Captain Joseph Patterson's tabloid, the *New York Daily News*, is the only newspaper in New York City which will be on the inaugural circuit. But it will take only a few news-picture "beats" of the kind on which this aggressive and bitterly hated tabloid has built its 1,450,000 circulation—the largest in America—to bring Mr. Och's *New York Times*, Mr. Hearst's *American*, Mr. Howard's *World Telegram*, Mr. Ogden Reid's *Herald Tribune* and other New York



AP members into line. It may be six months or more before equipment will be available to supply these late comers, which will give the pioneering Captain Patterson an advantage in attracting the ardent photomaniac. If Mr. Hearst's International News Service and Mr. Howard's Acme Pictures should decide to set up their own telephoto services in competition with the Associated Press (paralleling their news services: INS and UP), the advantage which the Associated Press will have on its competitors will be measured solely in terms of the number of months required to turn out equipment for the new services and in the number of AP members who would not be likely to subscribe to an additional costly service provided by Mr. Hearst or Mr. Howard. This whole tempest within the publishing business, therefore, places a royal flush in the hands of the consumer who buys the newspaper, regardless of the outcome. It may shave publishing profits a little closer or, when better times warrant it, place a heavier burden on the advertiser, but the consumer-reader is, for once, not in a position to be badly squeezed.

It is an interesting fact that while American newspapers have always been eloquent in their drives to afford the consumer the privilege of enjoying every progressive invention in other fields against the attempts of groups to stifle their use by agreement, the history of newspaper publishing in the United States has been filled with incidents of majority opposition to almost every new invention affecting newspaper publishing. The howls which went up from publishers in opposition to the first news-boats which met incoming steamers, the first telegraph wires, the first motor trucks for delivery, the first tele-

type printer circuits, the broadcasting of news by radio, all merge with this latest opposition to the telephoto. Each was pioneered by a few aggressive publishers and subsequently adopted by all who could afford to remain in the business. The majority have been remarkably short-sighted in their ability to see that the newspaper can not remain static, and that continued publishing profits depend largely upon the publisher's ability to harness each succeeding invention to his own uses.

It is no secret that the daily newspaper is heading for revolutionary changes in its character during the next ten to twenty-five years. The publishers have succeeded temporarily in gagging the radio from the use of news on the air, except for "canned" handouts from the reports of the three news services at hours disadvantageous to radio, and occasional flashes of "transcendental importance." Few of the editors with whom I have talked in all parts of the country believe that this alliance between the publishers and broadcasters will last long; and when the lid is blown off this agreement, radio will take over one of the most productive functions of the daily newspaper: the flashing of important news. It is not likely that the newspaper will be able to compete with radio's natural advantage. Newspapers have already experienced severe drops in the circulation of their sports extras as the result of detailed accounts of major events and the flashed results of minor events on the radio. The newsreel, particularly under the spur of heated competition which has existed in the last few months, has a weekly audience of between fifty and sixty million people who see striking action "shots" of news events almost as quickly as "still" pictures are printed

in their newspapers unless telephoto is employed. The weekly newsmagazine has courted increasing popularity because of its presentation of news events briefly and with a background of interpretation woefully lacking in all but a few quarters of the daily press. It is quite possible that the use of telephoto for the extensive publication of news in pictures along with brief, informative and interpretatively written news stories may give new vitality to the daily newspaper and provide it with the competitive weapon it needs to combat the inroads of the radio, the newsreel and the newsmagazine on fair grounds, without resorting to the throttling of competition through questionable agreements. It may be argued that television will finally usurp this advantage of presenting news-pictures in the daily press, but the best experts I have been able to consult say that this is a decade or two away in practical achievement on a major scale. Without doubt, photographs will prompt the use of better newsprint by the daily press and possibly more extensive use of color and rotogravure. Some of the most aggressive publishers are experimenting with new methods of making up their pages to get the maximum values from their costly telephoto investment. Although Mr. Hearst has shown no signs of relenting on his stand against telephoto, his newspapers have undertaken extensive experiments with new headline, photo-engraving, and make-up arrangements during the last few months. Unfortunately, most of them resemble a rarebit dream of an erring printer; but Mr. Hearst taught us to like his screaming "streamer" inventions and he may be leading the typographical parade again. His new "label" headlines (TOT ROW for the

Vanderbilt-Whitney story) are not apt to satisfy the headline scanner who wants to know what happened in no more than six to ten words, and the headline reader makes up a powerful section to be heard from on such innovations.

#### IV

Those who feel that the headline writer and make-up editor are two of the outstanding menaces of civilization are not apt to get much consolation out of the new trend toward telling the news in pictures. Naturally an editor or publisher who has paid from \$25,000 to \$150,000 for the services of a machine to bring him pictures of outstanding news events is not going to bury those telephotos with the want ads, particularly if his competitor is not apt to have the photograph for a day or two. Not all subjects lend themselves to dramatic picturization. Murders, lynchings, riots, earthquakes, disasters, fires, assassinations, train wrecks, airplane crashes, horse races, football games and similar events which are packed with dramatic action will naturally take precedence as picture subjects. They will claim first honors in the new picture layouts, and because they are as current as the column of type describing the events, they will invade page one almost daily on all but the religiously conservative newspaper. Unless editors guard against this natural trend, the resulting distortion of news values will be far more serious than the allegations made against newspapers in the past. News from Washington, for instance, does not lend itself to picturization. There are dozens of subjects related to economics, politics, science, industry and finance which defy the camera to produce anything more than a prosaic



"shot" of an official reading a speech or signing a statement.

The editors are fast shaking off their old inhibitions against the printing of gruesome pictures. The Associated Press was a newcomer in the newsphoto business in 1929 when Chicago's gangland carried out its notorious St. Valentine's Day massacre. Basil G. Wyrick, then day manager of the AP Chicago office, selected a photograph showing the bodies of the seven slain men, and ordered it telephotoed to member papers. A few printed it on page one, most of the members declined to use it, and many wired bitter protests of criticism to the management. The Chicago member paper whose photographer snapped the gruesome shot did not use it, although it told the story more graphically than 20,000 words in type. Five years later the newspaper which was "scooped" on its own newsphoto used it on the anniversary of the St. Valentine's Day massacre. This illustrated the changed viewpoint of newspapers toward the use of the camera in reporting violent deaths, a province once reserved for the conjurer of lurid adjectives. Few newspapers hesitated to print the photograph of Dillinger's body on a morgue slab, the rows of corpses on the New Jersey beach following the Morro Castle disaster, or the bleeding head of the dying King of Jugoslavia.

Despite this general trend toward freer use of photographs on subjects once considered tabu for newspaper illustration, editors still preserve limits within which they indulge the appetites of their photomaniacal readers. The New York *Daily News*, as a fifteen-year-old tabloid which has risen to first rank in circulation among American newspapers, owes its success partially to

its dramatic and unusual news-pictures. It shocked the world of newsdom, if not thousands of its own readers, on January 13, 1928. That was the day on which 150,000 copies of its late editions carried a full-page picture of Mrs. Ruth Snyder dying in the electric chair at Sing Sing for the murder of her husband. The *Daily News* was selling at a premium of fifty cents a copy when the paper's editors reached their boss, Captain Patterson, in Canada and told him of their *coup*. He heard how a photographer brought from Chicago gained admittance to the death chamber as a reporter, sat in the first row of witnesses with a concealed camera strapped to his ankle, and got a striking "shot" of Mrs. Snyder just as the electric current coursed through her body. Captain Patterson also heard that only 150,000 late editions had been run off before the eight o'clock morning deadline, enforced under terms of the paper's AP membership; and that the first repercussion from the incident had come in the form of a cancelation of a \$10,000 advertising contract. "All right," shouted Captain Patterson. "Run it again tomorrow, all editions!"

But not even the *Daily News*, enterprising as it has been in the presentation of the grisly, is without limits in its judgment. When two Negroes were lynched in Florida during the fall of 1934, the Associated Press withheld pictures of the mutilated bodies from its member papers at first. The *Daily News* asked for a picture of the lynching victims. The AP furnished it, then sent the same picture to all newsphoto members with a note that it had been requested by a member paper. No member printed it. It was really pretty grisly. Too much even for the editors of the *Daily News*! So there are still

bounds within which the most uninhibited editor exercises judgment.

V

The signs of increased emphasis on news-pictures will not be welcomed by those criminal psychiatrists who see symptoms of a dangerous psychosis in the desire of criminals to be photographed for the newspapers. Dr. Smith Ely Jelliffe, writing in the *Journal of Criminal Law*, points to evidences of symptoms in the death cry of Giuseppe Zangara, who attempted the assassination of President-elect Roosevelt: "What, no pictures? No cameraman here?" The case of Clyde Barrow and his cigar-smoking girl friend, Bonnie Parker, is another one in point. They took their own pictures and distributed them to the press before the authorities caught up with them and made their bullet-riddled bodies gruesome subjects for the newsphoto services. Other notorious gangsters, Al Capone, Dillinger, "Legs" Diamond, and many lesser lights, have been known to court photographic publicity even when they shunned reporters. Dillinger even had the dubious distinction of having posed with a woman sheriff in an atmosphere of carefree frivolity.

The daguerreophobes, those camera-haters who insist that their privacy should not be invaded by the news-cameraman, will not welcome the emphasis on news in pictures. John D. Rockefeller, Charles A. Lindbergh, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Jr., and many others in public and private life share this viewpoint. Young Roosevelt has been one of the most violent camera-haters of recent years, threatening to whip a Boston photographer on one occasion and tackling a Philadelphia

photographer in an attempt to smash his plates on another. Lindbergh has been photographed hundreds of times, but he still insists on a certain amount of privacy. He developed an obvious hatred for the New York *Daily News* when Martin J. McEvilly, its picture chief, insisted on following Lindbergh and his bride, Anne Morrow, to Maine by seaplane, motorboat, train, automobile and fishing schooner in an attempt to get a picture of the newly married couple. When the late Charles Augustus Lindbergh, Jr., was born, Colonel Lindbergh made his own photographs in response to insistent demands from cameramen, distributed them to the major photo services and New York newspapers with the distinct understanding that none should get into the hands of the hated tabloid. The *Daily News* was "scooped" on the picture, but got one through subterfuge for later editions. Gossip had it that the tabloid planned a reprisal by offering a bonus to any photographer that could get a "shot" of the Colonel in an undignified posture. The succession of sensational news stories which later brought Lindbergh into the headlines swallowed up the somewhat apocryphal tales of reprisal. Rockefeller, once an ardent camera-hater, has consented to pose more frequently in recent years. J. P. Morgan was once classed as a daguerreophobe, but that term would hardly apply to him since he permitted himself to be photographed during a Senate investigation in Washington with a circus midget on his lap. Cameramen are often in danger of assault when covering riots, lynchings or court room scenes. During the murder trial of Dr. Alice Lindsay Wynekoop in Chicago, John Steger was struck by a law book hurled at him by the defense attorney,



Frank Tyrell, as he climbed on a chair to make a picture for the *Chicago Tribune* of the turmoil which resulted when Dr. Wynekoop fainted. The press does not have the right to be present at either civil or criminal trials, and judges often bar cameramen when reporters are admitted without question. Newspaper publishers are planning a determined effort to have this old rule changed.

The objections to newspaper cameramen are not without justification. Many of the men who have been identified with the camera fraternity have shown a genius only for being where they are not wanted or for placing themselves in needless danger of their own lives to catch the slightest of trivia on their photographic plates. I have suspected many of those whom I have known personally of having suffered a fall on their heads in infancy, the only plausible explanation for such unbounded combinations of brass, bravery, devotion, gall, tactlessness and idiotic behavior in human beings. It seems that the early tradition which linked the camera with sensational journalism has prompted this herding together of the emotionally unstable in the photographic fraternity. The new premium on newsphotos is apt to develop rather than diminish this unreasoning attitude of cameramen toward their subjects, and it is not a little alarming to contemplate it. There have been notable exceptions to this general run of men who have no conception of privacy or of ethics, but it remains for the future to develop cameramen who will be trusted on the same grounds that reporters are generally trusted today. The cameraman still hovers on the fringe of the journalistic world. His ruthlessness is due partially to the unreasonable ob-

stacles sometimes placed in the way of his carrying out an assignment. There seems to be little reason why such an organization as the American Academy of Political Science should not permit a newsphoto to be made of that body in session when Newton D. Baker is its guest, yet such an unsensational "shot" as that was denied photographers in New York not long ago. The organization sought publicity for its speeches and proceedings in the news columns, yet ruled tenaciously against the news-picture.

There are hundreds of stories, many of them embroidered in the retelling over mugs of ale, about the risks taken by newsphotographers to get their pictures. José Garcia, an office boy in the Havana office of the Associated Press and an amateur photographer, showed that he was made of the stuff from which newscameramen are developed during the Cuban revolution. He scored many picture "beats" for the AP at the risk of his own life. When police were shooting at rioters on Havana's Prado, Garcia rushed out, jumped on the rear bumper of a moving automobile, aimed his camera at the tumultuous scene and coolly snapped picture after picture as the mob moved toward the Palace. When police fired at him, he jumped, fell to the pavement, saved his precious plates, but sustained injuries which kept him under a doctor's care for twenty-five days. Even while he was under the doctor's supervision, he slipped out to score new picture "beats"; and on one occasion the Chief of the AP Bureau called him off the street just as a man was shot dead at his side.

## VI

The coverage afforded the Baer-Carnera fight in the Madison Square

Bowl is typical of the newsphoto arrangements made by a major photo service for such major sports events. The Associated Press alone had three photographers inside the Bowl and two making "shots" outside the Bowl. Motorcycle messengers with police escorts worked in relays rushing pictures every few minutes to departing trains and to chartered planes at a field near the Bowl. One plane flew to Newark at the end of the first round, prints being developed in a specially constructed dark room aboard the plane, so that a connection was made with an air mail plane departing for the South less than a half hour after the pictures were snapped in the Bowl. The process was repeated every few minutes to meet plane and train schedules, so that within three hours twenty-four packages of newsphotos had been shipped by train and fifty-two packages had been dispatched by plane in addition to undeveloped negatives. There was only one misfire in this elaborate schedule for the dissemination of the fight pictures: an airliner carried a package of photos 300 miles beyond their destination in a Western State. With the use of the new telephoto service, member papers will receive their pictures in all parts of the country within a few minutes after they are snapped.

The Associated Press pictures of the Nazi *putsch* in Vienna were flown from the deck of the S.S. *Bremen* 800 miles off Ambrose Light at eight o'clock in the morning. The plane landed in the Hudson River at 4:25 o'clock in the afternoon, and the pictures were rushed through customs and on to Newark airport by messenger. They were in Chicago at eight o'clock that night and in Los Angeles at seven o'clock the following morning. The pictures were printed

in California, 3,400 miles from the start of their journey, before the *Bremen* docked in New York. But, of course, all that will be a snail's pace with the new telephoto.

No one but a news-picture man would think of some of the subterfuges which have been used to surmount obstacles placed in the way of delivering newsphotos to America's news-hungry millions. During the Democratic National Convention in Chicago, the Associated Press used an ambulance as a dark room in which its photos were developed between the convention hall, airport and railroad terminals. In the turmoil which resulted when McAdoo was ready to swing California's delegation to Roosevelt, the police ordered all doors to the hall locked to prevent any one from entering or leaving. Pictures were being taken of one of the most dramatic moments of the convention, but the doors were barred. A stretcher was rushed in from the dark-room ambulance, an AP messenger with plates under his coat was the "emergency victim," with messenger and plates being rushed into the ambulance, which was soon on its way to the airport and telephoto office.

Despite all the resourcefulness of the cameramen, there are scores of big news stories in each year which find them flat-footed. It is easy enough to plan coverage for a staged event announced in advance, but the chances of getting the really sensational news stories at the moment of their occurrence is more luck than good management. Two of the greatest newsphotos of all time, the shooting of Mayor Gaynor in 1910 and the S.S. *Vestris* with its deck slanting for the final plunge to disaster, are typical instances. William Warneke of the old New York *Evening World* got his



picture of Mayor Gaynor because, like so many other photographers since then, he was late. Warneke was assigned to get pictures of the Mayor who was about to sail for Europe. The other photographers had got their posed "shots" and left. Suddenly a crank fired at Gaynor, and Warneke, the only photographer on the scene, got the picture as the Mayor toppled backward. The *Vestris* picture for which the enterprising New York *Daily News* paid \$1,200 was taken by a pantryman named Hansen, who took a picture with a little vest-pocket camera as the deck, filled with horror-stricken victims, was tilting for the final plunge. The most unusual "shots" of the assassination of King Alexander were made by newsreel cameramen who were grinding out thousands of feet of film in their regular assignment to an ordinary news event which turned into one of the greatest newsphoto stories of the year. The Denver *Post* photographer who was on the spot when police arrested two gangsters at the point of drawn revolvers just happened along on his way from such a prosaic assignment as photographing four grandparents with a new arrival. When five CCC workers were drowned near Speculator, New York, Joseph B. Gurtler of the *Saratogian*—like the proverbial postman on his day off—was at the edge of the lake photographing the ill-fated boat when it started off with eight passengers and, a little later, when three survivors were rescued.

And so it goes: the verbal reporter can get his story from eye-witnesses, but the cameraman must be on the spot if he is to get anything more than the usual run of news-pictures. The chances are 100 to one against his being there.

## VII

There is much to be said for the superiority of the camera's eye in accurately recording a news story over that of the reporter's impressions or, as is more often the case, the threads which the reporter is able to pick up from eye witnesses. Readers expect a high degree of accuracy in pictures, which is one of the reasons for their popularity as news sources, but isolated instances of fakery in photography have hurt the cause of telling the news in pictures. The defunct New York *Graphic's* composite pictures, which were used to portray everything from the bedroom exploits of Edward W. "Daddy" Browning to the linking of Willie Stevens with the Hall-Mills murder, did not aid the cause of truth in pictures. They were part photograph and part nightmare of the artist who prepared them.

Occasionally the newsphoto services are duped by outlandish hoaxes, such as that which the Hearst International News Service fell for in 1934 showing "a man flying under his own power." The picture was accepted as truthful and printed in scores of American papers, including such unusually cautious dailies as the New York *Times*. The photograph bore the caption: "A man flies on his own power for the first time in history: Erich Kocher wearing a safety costume and blowing into a box to make two rotors revolve, soars from a runway into the air near Berlin. A tail skid attached to his waist steadies him while in the air, and skis on his feet act as landing gear." Erich was seen leaping into the air, with skis and tail skid as described, and four people on the ground running after him. It was rushed to the United States by INS, which failed to check the fact that it had ap-

peared first in the April Fool edition of the *Berliner Tageblatt*.

Those hazy photos radioed across the Atlantic from Europe on outstanding news stories have done little to bolster public faith in news pictures. Upon the occasion of the assassination of King Alexander, photographs were sent by radio from London to appear in editions on the morning following the King's death. The photograph received by the Associated Press for its members was typical. It was possible to make out a figure on a horse at the left, the outline of a man near a limousine, and the head of a figure in the motor car. The caption gave the newspaper artists their cue for dressing it up as the scene of King Alexander's assassination. Since the Associated Press submits its pictures to members without retouching, the artists' guesses were numerous, varying, some psychic and some humorous. Nearly all dressed the figure in the motor car as King Alexander, some giving him an admiral's hat, some a military cap, and a few left him bare-headed. Most artists supplied the kingly visage with a mustache. The man near the running board was unmistakably drawn as the assassin. Some artists placed a menacing revolver in his hand, some gave him a cap or soft hat, and others left him bare-headed. The man on the horse was dressed as a police or military officer, and one artist, with extraordinary clairvoyance, placed a saber in his hand. When the actual photograph arrived several days later, it was discovered that neither the King nor M. Barthou (who was variously portrayed) was visible in the picture, that the assassin was bare-headed with his arm raised to protect himself, and

that the officer on a horse carried a raised saber. The King, if he had been visible, was wearing an admiral's uniform and had no mustache. The transatlantic radiophoto still leaves some opportunity for the imagination of the newspapers' art departments to be expressed. For the most part, however, the clear-cut, unretouched photograph is gaining in popularity.

The advent of telephoto for the transmission of news-pictures between major cities in all parts of the United States is packed with significance for tomorrow's reader. The fact that we learn to read through pictures and that the printed word is a secondary symbol, is at the basis of the growing interest in pictures. Photography has developed so rapidly that it is wholly possible to tell many a dramatic story with sparing use of words, and with more convincing effect. Books like *The First World War* and *Metropolis* indicate the type of subjects which can be handled in book form with photographs. It is not unlikely that tomorrow's reporter will carry a fool-proof camera of high quality to supplement the story he tells in words. Frank Gannett has already experimented with the equipping of his best reporters with cameras, and the results have been moderately successful. Probably nothing would be more distasteful to the present-day reporter than to take over some of the functions which he has felt strictly in the province of the nitwit photographer, but the cards seemed to be stacked against him. The headline scanner turned "photomaniac" is an unreasoning taskmaster, and we can only speculate on the ends to which he may shape the daily newspaper in the next generation.



# A Christmas Carol

BY WILLIAM SAROYAN

## *A Story*

MICHAEL went up the stairs three steps at a time and in the hall he walked so heavily that, sitting in her room, waiting, his cousin Elena could hear him. She became tense at the sound of his coming and hurriedly looked at herself in the small bureau mirror. It was a dull mirror and she always looked ghastly in it.

It's Mike, she thought, and for some reason it was so remarkable he should be paying her a visit in such a place that she could feel herself weakening and wanting to fall on the bed and cry. It was ghastly.

She powdered her nose and began to make pleasant faces at herself, saying to herself that she was very happy here and that everything was lovely. She tried to feel sophisticated inwardly, so that joy would be reflected in her face, but it was no use. There she was, right before her own eyes, looking pitiful.

She bit her lips, worrying and wanting not to look pitiful before her cousin. Why couldn't she feel the way she wanted to feel? It was dreadful. Why did she have to feel so wretched? Suddenly she felt the room about her: it was the room that made her feel ugly. It was a horrid room. And she wondered how Mike would feel about it; how surprised he would be.

She wondered what he was thinking, coming up the hall.

Tears came to her eyes: everything was dreadful. She began to dry her tears and to make the pleasant faces again. It was horrid.

A dank, rotten smell, a dirty dump, Michael was thinking. He could not understand what had got into his cousin to make her leave home and try to live in such a rotten place. What the hell, he thought. I wonder what's eating her? He knew there had been a little fight between Elena and her mother, but Italians were always fighting. He was always fighting with the old man. What of it? It was because they loved one another so much. And here it was Sunday evening, the night before Christmas, and Elena all alone in such a dump. The lousy smell of the place. He wouldn't stay in such a joint ten minutes. Modern ideas. Go out into the world and make a go of it. All that rot. And all the folks at home sitting around feeling rotten, and Elena's mother fighting all day with Elena's father, trying to make him understand that she hadn't really said anything. She had simply spoken to her own daughter. She had that right. And all that stuff. It was all stupid. And what a rotten atmosphere, a dark hall, the smell of



mold. What sort of people lived in such a place?

Michael found the room, Number 27, and for a moment looked up at the number over the door, feeling rotten. Number 27, he thought. What the hell. He knocked softly at the door and said, "Elena."

## II

His cousin opened the door and he saw that she was looking sick. It made him angry but he tried to feel very happy.

The first thing Michael noticed about the room, still standing in the hall, was the small gas-range. Yes, he thought, it is one of those rooms. You get up in the morning feeling like you ought to commit suicide, and instead you make yourself two cups of coffee, a little toast, two boiled eggs, and you sit down and eat. But always the look of the place makes you want to commit suicide.

Walking into the room, talking pleasantly with his cousin, Michael gave the room a swift glance, then frowned with good humor at the girl. The frown meant a number of things.

Elena felt Michael standing at the door and her heart began to beat like jazz music, syncopating. She made one last attempt to seem happy. She gathered all the smile that was in her, all of it that she could fake. She was delighted to see him, but it was the sort of delight that called for weeping, not laughing. He was looking splendid. Big, easy-going, worryless, casual Michael. He was splendid in his big black double-breasted overcoat and his black hat with the brim turned down, and all the rest of him. She could barely keep herself from crying. He doesn't like the room, she thought. He doesn't like the effect it's had on me. Everything is

horrid. But she smiled and asked him to let her have his overcoat and then he turned around and she saw him frowning. It was too simple: he knew everything, the whole truth about her and the room, and he was simply frowning about it, not wanting to hurt her feelings. Good Michael. But it was horrid, making him pretend this way.

Michael placed the packages he had brought on the small table and was sorry he had bought flowers instead of candy. Roses would look terrible in such a room, and they would hurt Elena, make her feel embarrassed. But he was happy about the wine. She needed wine.

"I brought some flowers, Elena," he said. "And some wine. The new stuff. The legal stuff. It is finer than the old man's."

He removed his coat and hat and insisted on putting them away himself. The closet was small and it had a mothball smell. Elena's clothes looked sickening, hanging in the closet. He kept himself to himself and went on talking pleasantly. The room was the whole affair: bed, bureau, gas-range, table, rug, and those pictures on the wall: if it wasn't Elena's room he would bust out laughing. The whole place was like a nightmare. You could feel all the loneliness of everybody who had ever slept in the room, all the horror. Home sweet home.

There was no vase in which to place the roses and for a moment it seemed to Elena she would have to cry. She hoped Mike couldn't tell what was going on inside of her, and she smiled gratefully when he said, "Here, the coffee pot. It'll do, won't it?" She filled water in the blue porcelain pot and arranged the dozen roses in it.

"Mike, they are lovely," she said.

Michael thought, what the hell.

"Roses are a dime a dozen these days, Elena," he said. There was a chair, two of them in fact, one for each of them, but he didn't feel like sitting down. It seemed as if the proper thing for them to do was to place the roses in the coffee pot, gather Elena's things together, and get the hell out of the place. He wondered why it couldn't be quite so simple. After all she was suffering. Why should she want to be a bawlbaby martyr? Disgusting.

"I got your phone call," Michael said, "and came right over. I didn't say anything to the folks." He frowned and added, "You know."

Elena said, "Thanks, Mike. I'm so glad to see you. Let's sit down and talk."

Michael sat down and listened to himself talking to himself talking to Elena, and he kept worrying about the time, wondering how he would ever get away. He laughed with his cousin and after a while he saw that she was really getting something out of his presence, that it was bringing her around to herself, and he began to forget about the time. He began to feel that he would merely have to telephone Margaret and tell her he couldn't go. It would make Margaret mad and she probably would never have anything to do with him again, but he knew he would tell her he wouldn't be able to make it. He could feel it was getting to be around eight-thirty; about time he was going up to the door of Margaret's house on Sacramento Street and ringing the door bell. He would at least have to telephone her. It would kill her. They had planned on this Christmas Eve party for weeks. And when you got down to it it was a rotten dirty thing to do. Nevertheless, Elena; and to hell with conventions.

Michael suggested they go out and

have a bite to eat. He had in mind a real Christmas dinner, turkey and all the rest of it, and wine, but he wanted first to get Elena in the mood to go. But Elena would not hear of it. Michael would have to eat with her—at home, in this room. She had spaghetti and grated cheese and she would cook him a swell meal. There was salami, too. She didn't want to go out and have Michael spend money.

Michael understood that she merely didn't want to go out, didn't want to be reminded of all the happiness outside, that was all. He said he would be delighted to eat with her.

"But you've got to let me go across the street and get some pastry," he said. "You know I like pastry."

### III

He left the room without his overcoat and hat, and walking down the hall he passed a man going to his room. The man seemed dazed, in spite of the fact that he was sober, and he seemed to be something that was dying. It was in his eyes, and Michael thought, what the hell, what a place to live in. What do people think who live in such places? How do they feel? Particularly on Christmas Eve? Why in hell didn't he come right out and tell Elena not to be a fool and go home where she belonged? Why in hell, if necessary, didn't he give her a spanking and take her home in a taxi? After all she was acting like a child.

At the drugstore he telephoned Margaret. He talked, arguing passionately, five minutes. At last she hung up on him, and standing in the small telephone booth with the receiver in his hand he could imagine her crying, and he felt rottener than he had ever felt in his life. God damn Elena, he thought.



He purchased a deck of cards and a copy of *The Good Earth* for Elena. On the way back he stopped at the grocer's across the street from Elena's rooming house and tried to buy steak. Elena needed food; she was starving. But the butcher had gone home and the clerk explained that it was against a city ordinance to sell meat after six o'clock. And on Sundays.

"Is there any meat in the refrigerator?" Michael asked.

"Well, yes, in the refrigerator," the clerk said.

"All right," said Michael. "Go on in there and get me two good steaks. If anything happens I'll be responsible. My father is a member of the board of supervisors." That was good. The old man ought to feel proud of that.

"Here," Michael said, "put the meat in this paper bag and the city spies will think it's onions. See?"

"All right," said the clerk, "but it's against the rules, and I'm no butcher. I'll do what I can."

"Thick slices," said Michael.

While the clerk was in the refrigerator looking for steak, a customer entered the store, a middle-aged lady holding Christmas parcels. Michael felt amused.

"The clerk has gone to the lavatory, madam," he said. "He will return in a moment. Is there anything I can do?"

"Well," said the lady, "I want a package of Lipton's tea. I'll wait, though."

"Don't think of it," said Michael. He walked behind the counter and removed a package of Lipton's tea from the shelf. He placed it in a small bag and arranged this new parcel among the others the lady was holding. "Don't bother about the ten cents," he said amiably. He knew the lady's dime must be very deep

in her purse and that it would take her a half hour to get to it, laying down the packages and picking them up again.

The lady was slightly embarrassed, but impressed. Michael was a gentleman, no doubt. Well, it wasn't an insult to accept a ten cent package of Lipton's tea from a stranger. "Thank you," she said. Michael opened the door for her.

"And what is more," he said, "I wish you a joyous Christmas, and a serene and a prosperous New Year. Good night."

He stood alone in the store, feeling rotten.

God damn Elena, he thought. And God damn Margaret too. Neither of them being reasonable or decent. What the hell. And him amusing himself on that fine lady. God damn him.

The clerk emerged from the refrigerator, holding the brown paper bag. He placed the bag on the scales and the weight came to four pounds.

"You said thick," the clerk explained sadly.

"That's fine," he said. "I'm deeply grateful to you. You are a gentleman, believe me. What part of the cow did you cut from?"

"I don't know what part," said the clerk. "But it's all meat, no bones."

"How much?" said Michael.

"Well," said the clerk, "at thirty cents a pound . . ."

"All right," said Michael. "That's a dollar twenty. I sold a package of Lipton's tea while you were gone. We'll say that was a quarter. Here's two dollars for you. Keep the difference. And a merry Christmas to you, too."

Michael took the bag and left the store. He returned in a hurry and said, "Oh yes, have you any pastry?"



He purchased several snails, a small chocolate cake, and returned to his cousin's room. What a Christmas Eve.

## IV

The room was full of steam. Elena seemed happier. Doing something changed her, made her seem happy. Perhaps that was why she had gone to work in the department store. To be among happenings, to be among people, real things. All the same it was nonsense. He placed the bundles on the bureau and asked how the spaghetti was coming.

"I brought you *The Good Earth*," he said. "People rave about it, ladies especially, so it can't be very good, but it was the only novel at the drug store worth bothering with." Then he thought maybe he shouldn't have brought a book; it implied that she was to stay in this place; it implied a time to come. Yes, it was thoughtless of him to have bought her a novel.

He opened the brown paper bag and brought out the steak wrapped in heavy meat paper. "I'm starving," he said. "I brought some steak. We'll have a regular Christmas dinner."

By eleven o'clock the dishes were dry and in their places. There was nothing to do but talk or play cards. It was not easy to talk with Elena, since there was so much to leave out, so Michael produced the cards.

"I'll teach you to play casino," he said. "It is a fine game for two."

In ten minutes they were playing the game and saying no more than the game required: deuces, treys, sevens, cards, etc. Nothing about Christmas and the folks and all the things that were important. Elena found the game delightful. She laughed and smoked cigarettes and drank wine. It was splen-

did having Michael with her on Christmas Eve.

At midnight Michael said, "Well, Elena, it is Christmas."

For a moment Elena could not speak. She began to shuffle the cards and deal. "Look how lucky you are," she said. "Two aces up."

The game went on until daybreak. It was useful to both of them, but each felt somehow that as soon as the game ended something would happen. They were playing the game in order to delay this inevitable event, and all the unspoken words were accumulating in them, waiting for the game to end. It ended suddenly, without any articulated agreement. It was Elena's deal and after shuffling the cards she shoved them aside and looked into Michael's face. It was perhaps the only direct and frank glance she had given him since he had come to her room. It was full of shock and amazement. Michael thought, I wonder what I ought to do now? He saw that Elena was being honest at last and he knew that she expected some marvelous action from him, with or against her will, and it worried him. He disliked interfering with people, but at the same time he felt and accepted an obligation to help Elena. He hoped he would be able to do the right thing, even if it hurt her. The truth of the matter was Elena was being childish. It was up to him to arouse her and get her to return to her family. She was twenty and he was a year younger, but somehow he felt like an older brother.

He got up from the table and moved to the small window, the only window in the room. He let the blind up and looked out of her room for the first time. The view was of an untidy alley and for some reason this angered him

more than anything else about Elena's being away from home. He stood at the window staring down at the alley and feeling bitter. Then he turned and began to stare openly and with resentment at the room, the walls, the ceiling, the floor, the bed, the gas-range, at Elena sitting on the bed, and he was no longer willing to go on being kind and gentle. It seemed to him that Elena, in spite of her stubbornness, wanted him to be severe, and he was certain that she would be greatly displeased if he did not be.

"It's Christmas, Elena," he said. "What the hell do you call this?"

Elena began to sob.

"Listen, kid," Michael said. "Don't be that way. Don't make yourself miserable. You don't have to stay in this damn hole. We've all had fights with our folks. What the hell, Elena. Don't sit there and bawl. It's Christmas, kid,

and the folks are dying to see you. They'll never be happy again until you go back. Why do you want to hurt them this way?"

While he was talking Elena began to really cry, the way some women will cry at times, and Michael thought, Well, let her cry; it will do her good. She's been wanting to cry a long time. He went on talking, deliberately hurting her, and at last she began to reply to him. "I won't go back," she said. "I simply won't go back. I'll die here first. You wait and see, I'll die here before I'll go back."

And standing over her, feeling all her sorrow and pain, Michael thought, God damn Elena, but he knew he was doing the right thing and he knew he would be able to get her into a taxi and return her to her family on Christmas Day, and he continued being angry and tender with her, making her cry.



# Our Palingenesis of Talk

BY H. W. WHICKER

*The World War and organization killed American conversation;  
the depression is regenerating it*

PREVIOUS to the World War freedom of speech fared no worse in America than any other constitutional right. Over the nation at large free discussion of life's issues and problems was the rule, not the exception. Religion, politics, economics, morals, sex and various aspects of the contemporary scene were threshed out for what they were worth in the chance symposia of barber shops, country stores and other centres of communal association. Heated pros and cons greeted the expression of any sentiment or opinion. An idea carried a challenge and precipitated a clash. Men disagreed and were the wiser for it. To think straight and speak true was to command the respect of one's fellows and find adventure in the realm of controversy where truth confers royal favors upon honesty, humor and integrity. Friendship thrived in this atmosphere. That spineless bastard of philology, the word "yes," was seldom heard but in answer to an invitation to drink with a man or break bread at his table.

Back in those primeval days America was first of all an agricultural nation, with the majority of her population scattered over vast areas on small farms or in isolated towns and villages. The

frontier was still in the national bloodstream. Men lived close to the good earth, their bodies rugged, their hearts warm, and their hands gnarled from conflict with the elements. Theirs was the independence of spirit that came from owning the soil they tilled. Such people were often ignorant and narrow, I know; but ignorance, like wisdom, is only relative; and if they had not then learned to make the most of such modern methods of communication and transportation as the radio and the automobile, and if they had fewer schools and printing presses than have we, they were the less confused by the multiplicity of facts in the chaff-pile of our knowledge, and the more capable of reasoning directly and simply into the vital problems of existence. They saw the sun rise and the sun set, and the seasons come and go; day by day they looked intimately and personally into the book of life as each spring and each generation it is written by the Infinite Mind back of being in the greater terms and symbols of things that grow. If it is possible for wisdom to come to us through the dry findings of scholars, scientists and research specialists, it was also possible for wisdom to come to them through their observations of



pregnancy, birth and growth in human, animal and plant life, whether in the cradle, a barnyard, a field of young corn, an orchard or a garden. And it was from this rich and varied background of observation that they talked, and out of their talking determined the trends and tendencies of their social order. Religiously, morally, ethically and sexually they were not one whit worse off than are we; and the same may be said of their politics, their sociology, their economics, their art and literature and their relaxation and diversion.

It is no part of my intention to hark back to the "good old days" for my perfect state: those days had tares among their wheat, and dragon's teeth were germinating in the soil; but I do insist that Nature, in whatever age, must grow so much bad in order to produce so much good, and that it is the good, not the bad, which sets values and establishes perspective in the definition of life. Since remotely in our recollection there was a period when talkers were welcomed in social intercourse, it is only reasonable to probe as far as possible into the influences behind their talk and discover what, if anything, we have to gain from its palingenesis in our own era.

## II

The decline of conversation in America began, I suspect, during the World War when that subject dwarfed all other interests and reduced individual thinking to a common level of hysteria. Victory in the field rested to no little degree upon unity behind the lines; patriotism, accordingly, took stern measures against divergence of view, the spirit of talk; and those who raised their voices in opposition to war measures and policies faced social ostracism and

went to prison. Opinions were pullulated for us in propagandic hot-houses, and we swallowed them down like trench rations. The War had to be won. Loyalty to the flag was the sum and total of individual virtue and integrity. The state and all it included were right beyond challenge. No questions were asked. No questions were tolerated. It was necessary to keep emotionally in step with a hundred million others. The habit of mind of conformity fixed upon us like a vice.

The revival of normal, personal interests immediately following the signing of the Armistice might have wiped out the conformity complex and rehabilitated talk, had it not been for a sudden, sweeping movement of the masses toward urban centres of population. Reconstruction in Europe caused an unprecedented demand for manufactured goods, iron and steel goods in particular. Thousands of our young men had either been killed or maimed and crippled in action, and some three million others were temperamentally unfitted for quick adjustment to circumstances of civil life by intensive military training and the experience of what they had been through at the front. There was a shortage of labor at a time when fabulous profit was stimulating boom and inflation. Wages were high. The farm lost its inducement to the farmer. Men who had been their own masters there were now ready to serve other masters in factories and mills. Then, as now, the wage earner took orders like a horse and executed them like a beast of burden, or he was not long a wage earner. He soon lost the creative urges which had characterized him on his own land as an agronomic individualist. He soon learned to hold his peace, for controversy is not conducive to permanency of

tenure in employment. Talk was breathing its last in America.

The War, again, could never have been pushed to a successful conclusion without organized methods of procedure. Organization was the jawbone of an ass with which the modern avatar of Sampson had slain its millions of Philistines. As such, it was worshiped with patriotic fervor. The religion of organization spread. Its innumerable denominations and sects were each of them holy with the holiness of the organized and unified state when the big guns were booming. The individual passed into total eclipse. He was nothing unless he belonged to the Chamber of Commerce, the Rotary, the Kiwanis, the Lions, the Lambs or any one or more of a host of fraternal and welfare organizations patriotically hosannaing ideals and sloganizing service with little thought of what practical ideals and actual service were. Blind optimism prevailed. Talk was drowned out in a babel of pomposity. Thunderous applause greeted any conforming commonplace. What was said mattered little; it went down like the latest patented breakfast food, and its weight came entirely from who said it. There was less meat, as a consequence, in the public utterances of the period from the Armistice to the stock crash of October, 1929, than in those of any other period of similar length in the history of the nation.

When before the Armistice the individual differed with the state over such issues as conscription, impressment into branches of service other than military or naval, Liberty Bond purchases, and the right to speak his mind, he was branded a traitor and shut off from social intercourse. In spirit, at least, post-War organization clung to this precedent for silencing its critics. A law defin-

ing criminal syndicalism was written into the statute books. For any honest protest against our moral disintegration, our political corruption, our lack of ethics in business, and our wave upon wave of major crime—though we were then in the midst of our jazz age faced with the actual evidence of the Teapot Dome and other scandals, and were ourselves victims of frauds and swindles on every hand—the individual was pretty certain to be stigmatized a “Bolshevik,” a “Red,” a “Communist,” a “radical,” or a “crank” dangerous to the peace and welfare of the community. Sanctimonious deacons of the service club faith evangelized him in somewhat this wise: “*Be constructive!* Never condemn anything unless you have something better to take its place!” If by chance he had a position, especially one cloaked with public interest like teaching, they became more peremptory: “Well, if you don’t like it, why don’t you get the hell out of here?” And quite often, by the simple expedient of cutting off the source of his livelihood, a modern substitution of starvation for the rack and stake of the medievalist, they personally saw to it that he was on his way.

The Devil, I am told in an old tale which may serve as an apologue to the part organization played in the death of talk, was one time walking down Fifth Avenue with a philanthropist.

Said the philanthropist, pointing out an ideal: “There, Mr. Devil, we have something which is perfect, both in theory and practice, in the good it does humanity.”

The Devil was much perplexed; but after some study, he replied: “Mr. Philanthropist, I daresay you had me worried; but on second thought, my excellent friend, I have one final recourse against it.”



"And what is that?" said the philanthropist, smugly.

"I'll organize it!"

Now while the Organizationists, with conformity as their Jehovah, were proscribing freedom of speech as a fallen angel and carrying on a militant inquisition against controversy and her heretical individual talkers, the new industrial order and its congested centres of urban population had vastly increased the complexities of existence. The agronomic individualist had been a Jack-of-all-trades on the farm, producing most of the necessities of his life. The urban laborer was now forced to turn to an infinitely varied manufacturing system for food, clothing, shelter, warmth, light and even the water he drank; his dependence upon the new industrial order was complete. Science also had life under the microscope, dissecting and atomizing what to the pre-War mind had been relatively simple, understandable facts of being; the field of knowledge became incomprehensible to the layman. Specialization and standardization were the twin Messiahs born in the Manger of Organization for the salvation of mankind. The layman was no longer in a position to discuss anything intelligently. Only the specialist could speak with authority; and there was finality in what he had to say on any subject from the vitamin to the workings of the human mind. Our attitude was one of mute acceptance. We swallowed meekly. We no longer "bought" what we needed; we were "sold" what a "quota system" of distribution decided we should have. Salesmanship replaced the arguments of common sense in exchange. We questioned nothing. Our wits were stupefied, our vocal organs paralyzed.

Educational systems are the slaves of

contemporary trend and tendency. No educational system, when supported by public funds, is the sort of dog to bite the hand that feeds it. To education, as to the super-organized commonwealth still impelled by War attitudes, whatever was right, had always been right, and would always be right. The actual truth in history, wherein are recorded the conquests of the state, was no more welcome to the educator than the actual truth in commodity values to the salesman. There were certain things we should know, and certain things we should not know. In the intellectual field, as in the physical field, we no longer questioned, we no longer argued; we were "sold," and the viewpoints we carried away from the college commencement bazaar were as highly standardized as the clothes we wore or the cars we drove.

### III

"And it is in talk alone," says Stevenson, "that we learn our period and ourselves. In short, the first duty of a man is to speak; that is his chief business in this world; and talk, which is the harmonious speech of two or more, is by far the most accessible of pleasures. It costs nothing in money; it is all profit; it completes our education, founds and fosters our friendships, and can be enjoyed at any age and in almost any state of health. . . . The spice of life is battle; the friendliest relations are still a kind of contest; and if we would not forego all that is valuable in our lot, we must continually face some other person, eye to eye, and wrestle a fall whether in love or enmity. It is still by force of body, or power of character or intellect, that we attain to worthy pleasures. Men and women contend for each other in the lists of love, like rival mesmerists;



the active and the adroit decide their challenges in the sports of the body; and the sedentary sit down to chess and conversation. All sluggish and pacific pleasures are, to the same degree, solitary and selfish; and every durable bond between human beings is founded in or heightened by some element of competition. Now the relation that has the least root in matter is undoubtedly that airy one of friendship; and hence, I suppose, it is that good talk most commonly arises among friends. Talk is, indeed, both the scene and instrument of friendship. It is in talk alone that the friend can measure strength and enjoy that amicable counter-assertion of personality which is the gauge of relations and the sport of his life."

But Stevenson, alas, was speaking a long while before the World War, when talk grew out of the individuality of natural non-conformists who lived relatively simple, provincial lives, and who, when they had time on their hands, passed it in spirited conversational jousts with each other over the changing aspects of phenomena under their observation, defining, interpreting, selecting, rejecting, composing; and such talk, I insist, is the great national watershed of ideas in which the streams of living have their confluence to form the broader, deeper currents of conduct which make an epoch or an age. The prevalence of wartime attitudes had reduced this watershed to a barren desert long before Calvin Coolidge entered the White House. Organization, specialization and standardization had settled every controversial issue once and for all; our banner was planted on the summit of the Ultimate Status Quo; and that jingling little ditty, *Everybody's Doin' It*, was the National Anthem to which all of us stood at at-

tention when the band played and the procession passed by. To differ with a man who had joined some organization, and who felt himself bound by its codes and creeds, was to trick with patriotism and arouse his enmity, not inspire his affection and cultivate his friendship. For this reason, among others, any talk but bland acquiescence to polite commonplace was tabu by the host or hostess with a gregarious distaste for involuntary social seclusion. True, social intercourse went on as freely as ever; but when a man accepted an invitation to dinner, it was with the tacit understanding that he keep his opinions to himself—his host might have Republican, Rotarian, Spiritist, Prohi, anti-Prohi, Nudistic, or other toes whose bunions of allegiance were super-sensitive to a controversial boot-heel.

After dinner, what? Why, bridge or any one of countless other fads which were little more than maggots in the corpse of talk. Harmonious speech of two or more was gone. For that competition which heightened what Stevenson called "every durable bond between human beings" there was no choice but the prevailing fad, whether bridge, cross-word puzzles, miniature golf, jigsaw puzzles, ping pong, or other straws tossed out into the current of life by human ingenuity to keep exhausted swimmers from going down in the eddies of boredom. It was an age of dullness fit only for the exhibitionist, an age through which, our bellies full and our tongues tied, we walked with blind faith in our material millennium.

#### IV

The Great Collapse, which began in October of 1929 and reached its minus tide on March 4 of 1933, was due as

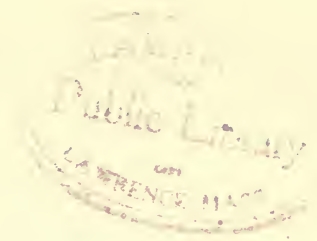
much to the death of talk as to any other single factor, for had we been able to keep our critical faculties alive by the speech of amicable difference of opinion, we would never have confused a slimy fen for solid social rock. The Great Collapse brought the post-War period to a close as dramatically as the World War wiped out the era of agronomic individuality; and when the stupor of the blow passed off in full awakening, all of us were aroused to a healthy skepticism for the whole of what the Organizationists of the past decade had held sacred. Life was too weighty a thing to stand on the flimsy foundations of post-War platitudes and dogmas. Millions of men were jobless, their plight and that of their families desperate; but fortunately, millions of men were no longer taking orders, no longer subservient. Questions came once more to their lips.

Disillusionment allied itself with elemental needs of warmth and shelter to drive men off the streets into public libraries; and there, impelled by restless curiosity over their state, men read as men have seldom read. New books and periodicals were dog-eared and tattered from their thumbing. The average man of today, as a consequence, is better informed than the average man of any other period from the dawn to the present, regardless of whether or not he has ever been inside of an educational institution. Divergent viewpoints in regard to government, economics, sociology, science and all else flow through his mind to coalesce into opinions of his own; and these, in turn, he discards for others more tenable that universal talk reveals in the searching analyses it is constantly making of the swiftly changing scene.

When a man accepts an invitation to dinner today, it is with the tacit understanding that he come prepared to advance and defend his opinions; and his host and hostess both, whatever their organized affiliations, are likely to prove formidable opponents in the lists of truth. After the dinner, what? Why, amicable but none the less competitive speech over what has significance in personal and public relationships. Stevenson's "every durable bond between human beings" may find its heightening in what mightily transcends prevailing fads, which, so far as I can observe, are now passing into their proper perspective of relaxation and diversion. Friendship can live and breathe in the atmosphere of today; and were Dr. Johnson, talk's truest priest, alive now, he would not be lonely, nor bored.

No one knows what the future holds. No one, however wise, can predict with any certainty what final form our social adjustment to a completely mechanized order will take. The past offers us no solution; it is futile to turn back to the agronomic individualist for "back to the farm" or other movements. The farm had its place and served its purpose in the social evolution of America, just as did the institution of chivalry in the social evolution of England; but like chivalry, the farm as I knew it before the World War is gone beyond hope of revival. It is more to the point that man is now hard at his first business in life, the business of talk, and that our present palingenesis of talk is reforesting the national watershed of ideas from which new streams of living are flowing toward their confluence in the broader, deeper current of an unfolding age, one that only ultimate conduct itself can adequately define and trace.





# Will France and Italy Make Up?

BY G. E. W. JOHNSON

*Since Hitler is the only man in Europe capable of starting a new world war, and Mussolini the only one able to dissuade him, the question is momentous*

WHEN, in the middle of June last, Herr Hitler paid his spectacular visit to Signor Mussolini, it seemed that the *rap-prochement* between the two dictators had laid the basis for a long-lasting co-operation between them. Hitler promised to keep his hands off Austria. As long as he kept this pledge, the chief hindrance to Italo-German amity was removed. True, it was difficult to believe that the renunciation of a project so dear to Hitler's heart could be made sincerely; one could not but suspect that it was merely a strategic retreat, a pledge to be discarded at the first opportune conjuncture. None the less, the break between the two dictators came much sooner than any one had anticipated. On July 25 there flared forth in Austria a furious though abortive Nazi uprising, of which the outstanding event was the murder of Chancellor Dollfuss.

The callously brutal aspects of the *Putsch* revolted public opinion everywhere, hardened though it has been by a year of unusually sanguinary events. But the outbreak came like a stab in the back to Mussolini. He felt that he had been grossly betrayed. Without a mo-

ment's delay, he concentrated troops on the Austrian frontier and prepared to march at the slightest sign of military intervention by Berlin. On July 26 he dispatched a telegram of condolence to Prince Starhemberg, the Austrian Vice-Chancellor, in which he minced no words: "The death of Chancellor Dollfuss grieves me profoundly. . . . The independence of Austria, for which he fell, is a principle that has been defended and will be defended by Italy even more strenuously in these exceptionally difficult times. . . . His memory will be honored not only in Austria but everywhere in the civilized world, which has already smitten with its moral condemnation the direct and distant instigators." Mussolini's assurance of an "even more strenuous" defense and his castigation of the "distant" instigators of the murder, which can only refer to the German Nazis, were a thinly veiled warning to Hitler that was loaded with dynamite.

The controlled Italian press, which daily receives instructions from the government propaganda bureau on the approved editorial tone to be adopted toward current events, was inspired to handle Hitler without gloves. One of



the most significant comments was that of the *Popolo di Roma*: "Europe is tired of having to live in a state of unbearable tension by the will of a handful of fanatics. Europe must recognize that she will never have peace as long as a party such as National Socialism, which has in its hands a great country, makes a political speculation of incitement to war. If tomorrow war were to break forth, the whole of Europe would spring at Germany, and upon all the frontiers of the Reich invading armies would make their appearance. This is the point to which National Socialism has brought Germany."

Utterances such as these made it clear that the break between the two countries was regarded in Rome as final and irretrievable. The sense of flattery which had made Mussolini favorably disposed to Hitler as a promising pupil who professed to have been inspired by his methods has vanished in the light of hard reality. The force of events has at last persuaded him that in his former encouragement of Hitler he was playing with fire. If Hitler's alienation of Mussolini results, as is confidently anticipated, in a *rapprochement* between Italy and France, it must take rank as a diplomatic revolution of 1934 second only in significance to the similar reconciliation of Russia and France.

## II

Before attempting to estimate the degree to which Franco-Italian relations are capable of amelioration, it will be well to consider some of the underlying historical trends that determine the present Italian outlook on world affairs.

Before the War, Italy was the least of the great powers. Many foreign statesmen, indeed, persisted in regard-

ing her simply as the most considerable of the lesser states. A consuming ambition of Italian nationalists, ever since the internal unification of their country was completed in 1870, has been to win for Italy a position of preëminence in the world that would seem not incommensurate with the honor of a land that has come to believe itself the residuary legatee of the grandeur that was Rome. The stigma of decadence—as nationalists interpret such things—implicit in Italy's decline from her ancient primacy must be wiped out. Such were the dreams that inspired the policies of many pre-Fascist premiers and foreign ministers like Crispi, Visconti-Venosta and Sonnino.

In her struggle once more to join the ranks of the imperial powers, Italy has fastened upon the status enjoyed by France as the first goal to be attained. France, like Italy, is an offspring of Rome and a sister-bearer of the Latin culture. She has approximately the same population. France, therefore, has inevitably served as the standard by which Italians measure their own political stature. Their ideological jealousy of the great powers has in practice found specific expression in an anti-French policy, or, it would perhaps be more accurate to say, an anti-French frame of mind.

In modern times a country's weight in international affairs is in large measure a function of its economic resources, for under normal conditions it is only a wealthy power that can afford to maintain the elaborate and imposing paraphernalia of armies and navies, colonial establishments and retinues of client states. Even the pious task of excavating and restoring the memorials of Roman greatness requires money. Unfortunately for the romantic vision-

aries, however, Italy is a country exceptionally poor in all natural resources except water power. It lacks the coal and iron deposits of Great Britain. Its agriculture has to maintain a population greater than France's on a territory little more than half as large.

There is but one way in which so poor a country can find the means to finance the luxury of being a great power. It must be prepared to subject itself to the austerities of a Spartan discipline. It is precisely on these grounds that Mussolini has on occasion sought to vindicate Fascism. Democracy, he contends, may be feasible in countries like France, Great Britain and the United States because they are wealthy. They do not have to count every penny. Their national economy has a margin capable of counterbalancing the wasteful inefficiencies inherent in the democratic process. But for a country like Italy extravagance can not be tolerated if she is to find the surplus funds to maintain an apparatus of national splendor such as Mussolini grandiloquently outlined in 1933 in his speech on the eleventh anniversary of the Fascist triumph, when he cried to the people, "At the beginning of the year XII I set you a severe task: Italy must be first on land, first on the sea and first in the sky. The glorious achievement of the past will be excelled by that of the future." Even if the primacy to which Mussolini exhorted his followers be interpreted as a superiority of technique rather than of power (Italy, for example, holds the air speed record), none the less it calls for arduous exertions and painful sacrifices. Italy's pre-Fascist statesmen who labored under the delusion that they could give their country greatness without paying the price are roundly berated for their want

of realism. People voting in free elections do not have the fortitude necessary to impose upon themselves the needful sacrifices, even when they are convinced that the goal is a laudable one. Each individual seeks to shift the load to his neighbor's back. The desired end can only be attained by inculcating in the masses an ideology that makes them regard as a kind of consecration the privations they must endure—a task that only a dictatorship can fulfil. Last May, when Mussolini announced to the Italian Chamber of Deputies his intention of spending a billion lire (\$85,000,000) on the construction of two monster battleships, and an equal amount on strengthening the air fleet, he forecast the heavy burdens that the Italian people must expect to bear with an almost medieval relish for the mortification of the flesh: "We are probably moving toward a period of humanity reposing on a lower standard of life. We must not be alarmed by this prospect. Present-day humanity is very strong and is capable of asceticism such as we perhaps have no conception of."

To foreign observers addicted to old-fashioned democratic principles, such a political philosophy seems a harsh tyranny that makes mock of the very concept of national glory. But the Fascists deny the allegation. They insist that the Italian people have been taught to accept this discipline as willingly as soldiers accept the discipline of an army, and that what people accept willingly is for them no tyranny. There is, of course, no way for an outsider to determine the real sentiments of the majority of the Italian people. To the extent to which they have been successfully indoctrinated with the Fascist ideology, it is probably true that they are conscious of no tyranny. When na-



tionalism fills the void in a man's emotional life that has been made vacant by the sapping of religious faith, he is as willing to sacrifice himself to the sacred cause as were the martyrs of old who quailed not when they had to choose between apostatizing and being thrown to the lions. The subjective bias of the individual is frequently as determinative a factor as the objective reality in coloring his reactions to a given situation.

### III

But to return to the subject of Franco-Italian differences. The points of divergence may be conveniently classified under four heads: naval rivalry; Italian colonial aspirations; the dispute over the status of Italians in Tunisia; and the struggle for the diplomatic hegemony of Central Europe. This article is primarily concerned with the last point, but a few explanatory words on each of the other three questions may not be amiss, as all the issues are closely interrelated and can not readily be disentangled.

*Naval Rivalry.* The Italians feel that their prestige demands that they shall have a navy equal to that of their sister Latin nation. The Italian attitude can be readily appreciated by Americans, for it was a similar urge that led the United States to insist on parity with Great Britain. But there is one important difference between the United States and Italy. The United States was able to impose its point of view because it possessed the financial resources to outbuild Great Britain in the event of unrestricted competition. Italy does not possess the resources to outbuild France, the strongest financial power on the Continent. Mussolini has therefore not been so rash as to embark upon

a naval race. He has contented himself with refusing to sign any agreement that did not grant Italy parity with France.

The refusal of the French to concede equality to Italy arises from their anxiety to maintain communications with their colonies across the Mediterranean in North Africa, whose native population is regarded as a reservoir of troops in the event of another European War. France can not be certain that she will be able to concentrate her entire navy in the Mediterranean; she may have to use part of it in the Atlantic to guard her western and northern coasts, and another part to keep open lines of communication with her more distant colonies in Asia and South America. Hence Italian parity with France would in practice almost certainly mean an Italian naval supremacy in the Mediterranean that could easily cut France's lines of communication with North Africa.

Italy's financial straits have heretofore precluded her from attaining parity even in battleships, to which she has a legal right under the Washington Treaty of 1922. Considerable stir was therefore caused in French naval circles at Mussolini's decision, already referred to, to build two 35,000-ton battleships, which would be much larger than anything France now has. Two battleships now under construction and planned to be the largest in the French navy will have a displacement of only 26,500 tons each.

*Colonial Aspirations.* Italy, like Germany, attained her national unity centuries later than the nations on the Atlantic seaboard of Europe. While England, France and Spain, and even small countries like Holland and Portugal, were free to devote their



energies to building up vast overseas empires, the petty, independent states of Italy and Germany were exhausting themselves in internecine strife. When Italy and Germany became united nations in 1870-71, they found all the choice portions of the earth's surface preëmpted by other powers. An ill-managed attempt by Italy to penetrate into Abyssinia in 1896 was thwarted when the Fuzzy-Wuzzies soundly trounced the Italian army in the battle of Adowa. Despite this reverse, Italy succeeded in planting small colonies on the East African coast, in Eritrea to the north of Abyssinia and in Somaliland to the southeast. Italy, however, had always been ambitious of securing a foothold on the Mediterranean coast of Africa, which was nearer at hand and seemed more strictly in the true Roman tradition. Excluded from Algeria and Tunisia by France and from Egypt by Great Britain, the only opening left to Italy in this region was in Tripolitania. As a result of the Italo-Turkish War of 1911-12—in which Italy was even more provocative than imperialist powers are wont to be—she ended the shadowy Turkish overlordship of this province and annexed it to the Italian crown under its ancient name of Libya. This territory lies on the opposite shore of the Mediterranean directly across from Italy, and is therefore, from the geographical point of view, the most logical field for Italian expansion. But it was soon discovered that although Libya occupied a large space on the map, it was no solution of Italy's population problem. The habitable portion is confined to little more than a fringe along the coast. At present it provides a home for less than 50,000 Italians.

The Italians, therefore, cast their eyes in other directions. They had

hoped after the War to share in the allocation of mandated territories taken from Germany and Turkey, but in this they were disappointed. In particular, their expectation of acquiring either Syria or Palestine was thwarted, and they secured only confirmation of their sovereignty over Rhodes and the Dodecanese Islands, which they had seized from Turkey in 1912. In 1925 the British ceded to Italy the unimportant territory of Jubaland, which was added to Italian Somaliland, but this was scant consolation.

With the erection of immigration barriers by the United States, the problem of finding an outlet for Italy's rapidly multiplying population, which is increasing at the rate of over 300,000 a year, has become pressing. The Fascist Government is anxious to find a home under the Italian flag for the unceasing stream of *bambini* that Mussolini is conjuring forth from the vasty deep. This has led the more ambitious Italians to fix their eyes upon the French protectorate of Tunisia, which adjoins Libya to the west and is a region more suitable for colonization by Italians. It is one of the many Italian grievances against France that the latter country, in agreement with Great Britain, staged a coup in 1881 and established a sole protectorate over Tunisia, thus terminating the joint control which she had formerly shared with Italy and Great Britain.

The stationary population of France and the well known reluctance of Frenchmen to leave the beloved *patrie* have hindered her from colonizing Tunisia on an extensive scale. There are 90,000 Italian settlers in Tunisia as compared with only 70,000 French: hence the inevitable suggestion that the sensible thing would be for France to

transfer Tunisia to Italy. Realistic Italian statesmen, however, understand that this proposal is outside the realm of practical possibility, and they have limited themselves to a demand for the rectification of the southern frontier of Libya. Last July the British agreed to transfer to Italian jurisdiction the northwest corner of the Sudan, a region bordering on Libya to the southeast. The Italians are now demanding that France allow Libya to complete its southward expansion by ceding to them a huge block of territory in Central Africa extending as far as Lake Chad. Italian empire-builders dream of tapping the resources of this region (chiefly exports of dates and salt) by constructing a railway across the Sahara from Lake Chad to the seacoast and thus infusing new life into the now stagnant port of Tripoli by making it the centre of a vast entrepôt trade. It is, however, highly improbable that France would ever bring herself to make so great a concession, though she may be persuaded to match the British gesture by ceding the small desert region of Tibesti. Tibesti lies athwart the path of some important caravan routes, but otherwise it does not appear to have much economic value. None the less it would be a concession that Mussolini would be able to exhibit to the Italian people as a diplomatic triumph, and to a régime that attaches an inordinate significance to the idea of imperial prestige such considerations carry great weight.

*The Status of Italians in Tunisia.* Although renouncing, for the time being at any rate, the hope of acquiring Tunisia, the Italians are eager to strengthen the foothold they have already gained there by preserving in perpetuity the "Italianity" of the Italian community

in that country by enabling the descendants of settlers to retain their status as Italian subjects and thereby keep alive a political tie with their homeland. France, however, has been seeking to Gallicize them, and a law passed in 1923 provided that all children born in Tunisia of Tunisian-born parents should be regarded as French citizens. Mussolini did not conceal his displeasure at the enactment of this law and is anxious to secure its repeal.

#### IV

*The Struggle for Hegemony in Central Europe.* The most troublesome source of discord between France and Italy, however, has lain in their divergent attitudes to the problems of Central Europe, with special reference to Germany, Austria, Hungary and Jugoslavia. Fundamentally, the real interests of France and Italy in this region have much in common; in particular, both are anxious—Italy even more so than France—to balk Hitler in his attempt to absorb Austria. But Mussolini initiated a policy with respect to Central European questions that has caused France an annoyance out of all proportion to any benefit that has accrued to Italy. He has advocated a measure of rearmament for Germany, a project to which France is resolutely opposed. He has stood sponsor to Hungarian claims to treaty revision, thereby exciting the fears of France's allies of the Little Entente. He has at times seemed sympathetic to the notion of fortifying Austrian independence, not by means of a guarantee to which France and the Little Entente would be parties, but by the alternative scheme of restoring the Habsburg monarchy under Italian protection—a project that makes cold chills run up and down the spines of the Little Entente



countries, which are gorged with lands taken from the former Habsburg Empire and therefore regard a restoration as an even greater menace to their integrity than Austro-German *Anschluss*.

The efforts that Italy has put forth in this region have not always been very happily contrived. Certainly, to advocate German rearmament and at the same time infuriate Hitler by thwarting his designs in Austria seems a contradiction in terms. It can scarcely be explained as an altruistic devotion to those principles of abstract justice which Mussolini is so careful to repudiate with scorn. What really is the guiding principle of Italian policy in this field? The most plausible answer is that Mussolini has deliberately adopted a line of policy calculated to annoy and obstruct France at every turn as an indirect means of bringing pressure to bear on her to meet his naval and colonial claims. I do not think, for example, that the vague references to Italy's claims to Dalmatia are advanced with any serious expectation of acquiring that province from Yugoslavia, but rather as a device for reminding the French that they promised Dalmatia to Italy by the London Pact of 1915, and that the failure to carry out the terms of this agreement, due primarily to the veto interposed by President Wilson's Fourteen Points, lays upon France a moral obligation to give Italy territorial compensation elsewhere. This interpretation is borne out by a speech made by Mussolini on March 18, in the course of which, among other things, he advocated German and Hungarian claims to treaty revision. "Italy has no future in the west and north [in Europe]," said Mussolini. "Her future lies to the east and south, in Asia and Africa. The vast resources of Africa must be developed

and Africa brought within the civilized circle. We demand that nations which have already arrived in Africa do not block Italian expansion at every step." Again on June 2 Mussolini made further allusion to Italy's disappointments: "If war is necessary, Italy's volunteers will shed their blood for Italy alone. Experience has shown them that it does not pay to help by land and sea the people who pretend to be our allies." These remarks may perhaps be interpreted as intimations that Mussolini is willing to call off his revisionist activity in Europe if France will pay the price. The shock to Mussolini's composure caused by the Nazi *Putsch* in Austria, which momentarily thrust Italy into the extremely dangerous position of being the sole barrier to a German advance, has no doubt influenced him to lower his price; and, by the same token, the fear of an increasingly aggressive Hitlerism has persuaded France that it would probably be economical in the long run to meet Mussolini half-way. As a result, Franco-Italian relations are better than they have been at any time since the War, and the prospects are most promising for a genuine reconciliation.

# V

If the Franco-Italian *rapprochement* is successfully consummated, one may expect to see some striking political realignments in the Central European and Balkan region. In particular, it would not be surprising to see either Hungary or Yugoslavia pass into Germany's orbit. Should the Franco-Italian *rapprochement* be unaccompanied by a similar development between Italy and Yugoslavia, the latter country, feeling that she could no longer rely on French protection against possible Italo-Hungarian



aggression, would inevitably turn to Germany. But it is more than likely that France will make an *entente* between Italy and Yugoslavia a *sine qua non* of her own *entente* with Italy. Such a restoration of amicable relations would require a renunciation by Italy of all claims to Dalmatia. France would not lightly alienate Yugoslavia, for such an action would destroy her influence over the Little Entente, and she would probably see Rumania and even Czechoslovakia, which are also fearful of Hungarian aggression, following Yugoslavia into Hitler's camp. France is not going to sacrifice her advantageous connection with the Little Entente for the sake of an understanding with Italy. Collectively, the Little Entente countries have a larger population than Italy and therefore could extend France more effective military assistance in an emergency. At the same time, the individual members of this bloc are minor powers, and as such much more amenable to French diplomatic guidance than Italy would be.

But if such a *rapprochement* between Italy and Yugoslavia does take place, then Hungary is likely to drift away from Italy. For if Mussolini resigns himself to surrendering Italy's claims to Dalmatia, he will no longer have any motive in continuing to sponsor Hungary's claims to treaty revision at the expense of Yugoslavia and the other Little Entente powers. With Italy, the demand for treaty revision in Europe has been no more than a strategical device for indirectly bringing pressure to bear on France in order to obtain concessions in other fields. With Germany, on the other hand, the demand for treaty revision is fundamental, and many Hungarians feel that in the long run they stand to gain more by an alliance with

Germany than by siding with Italy.

The problem of effecting a *rapprochement* between Italy and Yugoslavia has a psychological as well as a political aspect. Starting out originally with political differences, the two countries fell into the habit of galling each other's sore spots at every opportunity, and soon a state of mind was generated that did not always have a direct relationship with concrete issues. Yugoslavia irritated her neighbor by harboring political exiles from the community of half a million Slovenes and Croats who inhabit certain districts of northeastern Italy. Early in September the Italians were much perturbed when Slovene emigrés held an irredentist congress near the Italian frontier and expressed the hope that the regions of Trieste, Gorizia and Istria might one day be united with Yugoslavia. Italy, on the other hand, has retaliated by giving asylum to Croatian nationalist exiles from Yugoslavia—an issue that has flared into sudden importance through the complicity of some of these exiles in the assassination of King Alexander of Yugoslavia. It was fortunate that the King was not slain on Italian soil; otherwise this crime might indeed have proved to be another Sarajevo.

Other causes of tension are sometimes of a more Gilbertian order. In August and September there was an interchange of insults between Italian and Yugoslav newspapers, which devoted themselves to cataloguing all the occasions on which each other's troops had fled before the enemy. The Belgrade *Vreme* cited Adowa and Caporetto, two instances which the Italians found it difficult to beat. The *Giornale d'Italia*, Mussolini's Rome mouthpiece, castigated the "repugnant prose of the bestial official Belgrade journal." Mussolini

himself expressed his displeasure in a speech at Milan on October 6, when he said: "It is evident that there will not be much possibility of improving our relations with our neighbors across the Adriatic if they continue to flood the newspapers with polemics that wound us to the quick. The first condition for a policy of genuine friendship . . . is to cease casting reflections upon the bravery of the Italian army. . . . We who know our own strength are able to offer for the last time the possibility of an understanding for which there are sound reasons." The unusually mild tone in which Mussolini, who is not wont to speak with undue softness, couched his rebuke clearly intimated his anxiety to end the strained relations with Yugoslavia. His moderate course following the assassination of King Alexander was in keeping with this attitude. When Yugoslav mobs demonstrated against Italy in the belief that the assassin had been abetted by that country, the Italian Government suppressed the news of the disturbances on being assured that the Yugoslav authorities were taking all proper measures to restore order.

## VI

M. Louis Barthou, the late French Foreign Minister, looked forward to a *rapprochement* between France and Yugoslavia on the one hand and Italy on the other as the final touch to the great defensive system which, with masterly skill and tireless ingenuity, he was building up to meet the German menace. A visit by Barthou to Rome had been contemplated for early November; and it was to lay the groundwork for the important negotiations that were then destined to ensue that King Alexander of Yugoslavia made his fateful

journey to France. On October 9, while driving together through the streets of Marseilles, the King and Barthou were shot down in a hail of bullets let loose by an agent of a terrorist gang of Croat and Macedonian revolutionaries. By this tragedy two of the three principals of the impending negotiations were swept from the scene. The inevitable result was to delay for an indefinite period the process of *rapprochement*. Alexander and Barthou were both men who were in the habit of carrying their plans in their heads, and it may be some weeks before their successors are able to familiarize themselves with all the ramifications of their policies.

It is as yet premature to predict the consequences of King Alexander's death. He was the only dictator-king in Europe, and held the reins of foreign policy firmly grasped in his hands. He was personally partial to the French connection. According to his widow, the Queen Dowager Marie, France was "the country he loved best after his own." His last words, uttered to M. Jevtić, his Foreign Minister, are said to have been, "Safeguard Franco-Yugoslav friendship." Inasmuch as his son and successor, King Peter II, is but a lad of eleven, the government of Yugoslavia has passed into the hands of a council of regency headed by the late King's cousin, Prince Paul Karagjorgjević. Some time may elapse before we can determine who will emerge as the dominating personality of the new régime and what bias he will give to Yugoslav foreign policy. So far there has been no indication of any impairment of Yugoslavia's friendship with France or of the policy of *rapprochement* with Italy.

In France, Barthou has been succeeded as Foreign Minister by M. Pierre Laval, who during his incum-



bency of the premiership made himself well known to Americans through the visit which he paid to President Hoover. As M. Laval is planning a journey to Rome in the near future, it will not be long before we know whether he is capable of carrying to a successful conclusion the work begun by Barthou. Momentous issues hang upon the outcome of the parley between Laval and Mussolini. They will doubtless prove to be hard bargainers. It is to be hoped that Mussolini will not prove too grasping nor Laval too grudging, and that they will both rise above the short-sighted principle of "penny wise, pound foolish." The unpleasant duty of paying for the entertainment will fall primarily to the lot of France, and political expediency may well dictate the making of concessions that will wring the withers of sensitive French patriots. With the reservations always appropriate to prophecy, one may venture to forecast that if a satisfactory compromise is reached, some at any rate of the following provisions will be among its terms: France will concede formal naval parity to Italy, and Mussolini will subscribe to a gentlemen's agreement not to build up to the French level; France will cede to Italy the African territory of Tibesti, and agree to abrogate the law relating to the citizenship of Italians in Tunisia, or at least to suspend its application for ten years or so, leaving the question open for further discussion at the end of that period; Mussolini will disclaim any ambition of establishing an exclusive quasi-protectorate over Austria, and will agree that Austrian independence shall be guaranteed jointly by Italy, France and the Little Entente; Mussolini will dis-

continue his support for legalization of German rearmament and for revision of the Hungarian frontiers; and, finally, Italy will tacitly renounce her claims to any territory now included in Jugoslavia.

A really enduring *entente* between France and Italy will depend upon the striking of a bargain which, at least in its main essentials, conforms to the outline set forth above. If it can be satisfactorily effectuated; it will be a gain of incalculable value for the cause of peace, for it is certain that, as long as Hitlerism rules Germany, only the certain prospect of being confronted by an opposing array of overwhelming strength will suffice to deter the spiritually intoxicated Nazi swashbucklers from unsheathing the sword.

Hitler is the one man in Europe capable of unleashing another world war. Mussolini is the one man capable of making him change his mind. The character of the Italian dictator manifests two sharply contrasting aspects. One aspect is that of a bombastic pseudo-Caesar who is forever reënacting on a public stage the crossing of the Rubicon, without having quite made up his mind what to do after getting to the other side. The other aspect is of a man who at times seems to catch glimpses of the underlying realities of the European situation with a startling objectivity of vision rarely equaled by contemporary statesmen. Fortunately, this second aspect of Mussolini's character tends to be the dominant one at moments of imminent crisis. That is why one may be permitted to hope that it will be the aspect that will be in the ascendant during the decisive negotiations of the next few weeks.

# Safety in Numbers

BY VREST ORTON

*Weston, Vermont, finds a passable road toward "the more abundant life"*

LATE one fall afternoon, while leisurely exploring the hill country of Vermont, we drove along a dirt road which unexpectedly became a shadowed lane of canopied maples. Emerging, our car twisted around a sharp curve and without warning the narrow road dropped abruptly down a steep hill. From that hill we looked down. Cut deeply from the undulating hills was a valley framed on all sides by knotty slopes piled back to the horizon. Upon them reposed uneven squares of woodland sprayed by fountains of autumn pigment, yellow farm fields outlined by dark stone walls and recumbent green pastures dotted with cattle. Here and there a white house and red barn hung upon the slanting land. Down in the cleft of the hills, for that was what the valley amounted to, flowed a pleasant brook which caught the sunset and ran with it out of sight into the village, about half a mile ahead. There, touching the hazy fall sky, was a white church steeple, and as we came closer a brick house set on the tree-lined Common put another color on the already satisfactory palette. It was altogether a scene of dreamy quality, aided, no doubt, by the advancing twilight, but contributed to also by the slow progress across the

Common of an old man with a white beard, who was leading a brindle Jersey cow to pasture across the bridge. A sense of peace, quietness and other-worldliness flowed into us. It was as if we had surprisingly come upon the reality of a Sussex village out of Hardy, or a spot that Sarah Orne Jewett might well have celebrated as the finest flower of New England life.

We had no more than driven by the Common when, on the north outskirts along the brook, we saw the glow of a fire. Ahead, around the curve, a house was burning down. In front of it stood three men doing nothing to the fire. One had a hose in his hands but was playing no water on the blaze, which had by now nearly consumed the structure. We found the reason for this. When we learned why, we stopped longer and talked with the local historian, Raymond Taylor, to learn more whys about Weston, for that was the name of the village. The men were not putting out the fire, because they had set it. They had set it for the sole and sensible purpose of burning down the house and shed. Both had been tumbling in for years, Mr. Taylor told us, and had been an eye-sore and disgrace to the town. Further, the tottering buildings



had kept the children from using the swimming hole at that spot. People had got together, chipped in money, bought the house from its surprised owner and then burnt it down. After burning, they planned to clear the land, fill in the cellar-hole, draw sand into the brook and make a good safe swimming place.

A village that had enough gumption to do a thing like this appealed to us. So many originally lovely New England villages add ruin after ruin to the increasing number that they finally become only a cemetery of ancient relics, gaping cellar holes and inhabitants with minds in harmony with decay. But here in Weston, unless we were carried away by our impressions, was something fresh and encouraging. Here was, we thought at once, a true regional consciousness manifesting itself without being spurred on by professional social-workers and civic planners.

Of historic towns there are histories galore, and every so often the antique journals blossom forth with the discovery of "a charming little village off the beaten path wholly unspoiled by antique collectors." What the discoverers mean, of course, is wholly unspoiled by *other* antique collectors. It has of late years been the fashion among the intellectuals to cherish discoveries of these hidden-away Eighteenth Century survivals in the same fashion that they boast of "a little restaurant unspoiled by tourists where you can get a swell dinner and real wine for fifty cents." But alas, these little restaurants are usually dark and dank cubby-holes where food crudely cooked is insolently served and the wine composed of vinegar and ether. By the same token, I much fear that most of those "little Eighteenth Century villages" are nothing but small towns addicted to antique shops, summer

residents and sporty golf courses, and wholly surrounded by a thick, if pleasant, haze of romance and sentimentalism.

Even were the miraculous to happen and a real Eighteenth Century architectural survival be revealed by the intellectuals in an inviolate condition, little time would pass before a summer fringe of artists and near-artists, as in Woodstock, New York, and a wealthy set of bridge-playing golfers such as infest Manchester, Vermont, would flock into and over the haven. Ye Olde Antique Shoppes, Ye Colonial Tea Rooms and Ye Barre & Grille Taverns would become as thick and popular as in Westport or Southampton. The old architectural survivals would be done over, streets paved and butlers would be sweeping off the newly built cement sidewalks. For three delightful months of summer, the town would hum with new life. But in the course of this new life, the charming little village would have disappeared as cleanly as if a tidal wave had done its work.

Weston, Vermont, will, we believe, avoid all this. It has protected itself. There is a concerted and purposeful determination to make there the kind of life that can never appeal to the kind of people not wanted. The kind of persons seeking summer hide-aways in the form of marvelous old houses, chock-full of wonderful antiques at bargain, or almost no prices at all, won't find anything in Weston because the houses are owned by people who live in them the year around and all the antiques are being used. Those who have the inner urge to develop resorts, hunting preserves, golf clubs, dance pavilions, and other modern improvements will find no opportunity awaiting them in Weston, for all the land not owned by present

dwellers is owned and protected by the State and Federal governments. The only lake nearby is owned by a group of men who stock it with trout and prohibit the building of cottages and "developments."

What, we may boldly state, our forward-looking friends fail to see or understand is the great socio-economic law of diminishing human returns. A village is something more than a collection of green commons, quiet lanes, maple trees and architectural survivals. It is, more important, a group of human beings, but a small enough group to be perfectly autonomous and homogeneous. A small number of humans, and only a small number, can use the values inherent in village life. Increase the number beyond a certain point and the values, through that law of diminishing human returns, suddenly disappear. There is safety in numbers—in small numbers. The people of Weston, one feels, have realized this and it is interesting to see what they are doing, as well as to see what they have avoided doing.

## II

Weston is a village of 150 souls and somewhat akin to a true Eighteenth Century village. A number of houses surround an oval village green. Each house has some land, and that land is used by the owners for either farming or gardening, as their ancestors used it. The town was built in this way to inspire social life, promote trade and to provide protection from the Indians. These purposes are valid today if we substitute the word *tourists* for *Indians*. In the early New England towns, land was granted to settlers in proportion to their ability to use it. Every one had enough land to make him independent

as to the necessities of food, shelter and wood for heating. That principle applies to Weston today as it did a hundred years ago but with these differences: while the self-sustaining effect of the early life, because of crude utensils, tended to make agriculture wasteful and work hard, and the geographical isolation to invoke inbreeding and narrowness, these defects are today removed by the use of labor-saving tools and implements, electric and gasoline power, and by effective means of communication and transportation. Weston has, then, not felt the depression very much. Neither did it feel the prosperity very much. It was never up, it was never down—a condition hardly appealing to the promoter or advertising man. Economic matters still consist, for the most part, in the concrete realities of life: corn, potatoes, wood, beef, houses, services. The exchange of these commodities is, due to the small area and closely related social life, an end in itself, and not necessarily requiring the introduction of that abstraction called money. Dignity of labor, plain living, common honesty and mutual aid are more than catch phrases to men such as live in Weston. These are essentials, pragmatically demonstrated by the very character of their living.

There is no water-power large enough in Weston to arouse the interest of Insull's successors, though these gentlemen have gobbled up franchises and rights everywhere else in Vermont; the forests grow safely now in the public domain eternally protected from the successors of Kreuger and the pulp trusts; Weston is not between any two strategic points, so there is no reason for a railroad, trunk-highway or bus thoroughfare; there are no gold, precious ores or oil in the ground to attract ex-



ploiters of those materials. That there is not enough of any natural resource in large enough quantities to attract business go-getters and entrepreneurs constitutes another very good protection for Weston.

In considerable degree, the social and human values once visible in American life seem pleasantly conspicuous in Weston. And particularly so in comparison with the vacancy of life in the boosting small towns and in suburbia. Pretense, so far as human vanity allows, is non-existent. The prevailing philosophy is so worked out here that, did they but know it, Lenin and Calvin would turn over in their graves. It is justification by works. For example: Mr. Robinson has an automobile fifteen years old. He sees no reason for buying another because this one runs well (having been well cared for) and, most important, gets him and his family where they want to go. It delivers safe and sure transportation. The fact that it is out of style or lacks new gadgets has not harassed the pride of Mr. Robinson. He would think it foolish to sell this car for fifteen dollars (its market value) and pay out from \$750 to \$1,000 for a new one which could do no more for him. The "Joneses" know Mr. Robinson could buy a new one if he had a mind to, so Mr. Robinson has no need to impress them.

Weston is a place the city-bound ignorant would look down on. It lacks many advantages the city person thinks he has to have. But it exhibits qualities he hardly knows the existence of. Apart from the deeper human values of a closely knit social life based on present necessity and early social heritages; apart from the unaffected character of persons in communion with the eternal springs of nature; apart from the pro-

foundly valuable experience of enjoying civic life of genuine autonomy—the men and women of Weston can still point to an economic security now fast being denied many in urban centres. Westoners don't have much cash money, it is true, but they have many of the things cash money buys. They have accepted, long ago, the vicissitudes of nature and become masters, so far as men can, of their environment. But the story lies in how well they are making use of that environment.

### III

Two summers ago there was talk in Weston of the need for a Community House. They wanted a gathering place or club for meetings, for visitors, for general social purposes—in short a centre of the town's activities. It was a need for more than a hall with folding camp seats. Now they might have done all manner of things; they could have erected one of those familiar, false-front, garish, late Nineteenth Century Odd Fellows Hall buildings, or influenced by the pious zeal of the Y. M. C. A. have erected a squatty bungalow complete with gymnasium, swimming pool, bowling alleys and billiard rooms. Fortunately, these horrors were avoided.

In 1770, Lieutenant-Governor Colden of the Royal Colony of New York granted to Benjamin Stout some 26,000 acres of land embracing a large part of the township of Andover. The new settlement was called "Virgin Hall." But, as John Spargo, speaking this summer at Weston, remarked, the name had not interfered with the Biblical admonition to "be fruitful and multiply." Virgin Hall grew and eventually was set off from Andover as a new town called Weston, with its own local government. In 1797, Captain Oliver Farrar of Tem-

ple, New Hampshire, built at one end of the frog pond (now filled in to make the Common) a tavern or victualling-house, known by reason of its subsequent owners as the Farrar-Mansur House. This large, square, colonial building had for some years been falling to pieces. In the move for a Community House, the people of Weston saw here a great possibility. The owner, Frank Mansur, deeded the house to the Community Club for that purpose. Since then the restoration of this old building to its first condition has been going on. No attempt has been made to "improve" it. The pleasant idea came to some one that here was not only the most suitable house for community uses, with its good location, spacious rooms, fireplaces and kitchen, and a house that fitted admirably into the best character of the village, but it was a house that would well serve as a living example and not an ornamental, dry museum, of life as it was a century ago.

Every one in town took hold in the work. By the summer of 1934 the project was well advanced. More had to be done than was expected because the house had gone through many alterations in the course of its existence. Extra research and careful work were necessary to put it back in its original shape and at the same time make it serve contemporary needs. Because of the isolated location of this hill village in 1797, outside architectural influences must have been fifty to seventy-five years late in coming here. This tavern has the lines and interiors of the early Eighteenth Century house instead of those of the period when it was built. The second floor is occupied along the entire front by a ball room with two fireplaces on the sides. On the first floor are the bar and the tap room. The latter,

between the fireplace and inner wall, is connected with the kitchen and has the original grating-shutters. The room across the hall was used for secret lodge meetings in the early days and the "eye-tight" shutters are still intact. There are other unique features of this kind equally as interesting. The house has seven fireplaces in which, when unbricked, were discovered the iron andirons, cranes, hooks and kettles used by Captain Farrar. The people of Weston have given not only time, money and work to the house, but also furniture from their homes so that now the house is appropriately furnished with antiques that have never been in an antique shop. Former residents now living in the several parts of the Union have also sent in antiques and furnishings. One or two rooms are used for the relics of the local historical society once housed in a room fitted up by Miss Sarah Davenport in the Congregational Church. A good array of paintings of local places and people hang on the walls. The floors are covered with rugs hand-woven and braided in Weston. There are early craft tools, kitchen utensils, dishes, pewter and farming implements in their proper places.

A most interesting feature is the fine series of murals by a local artist, Le Roy Williams. Drawing on the town records and memories of older inhabitants, Mr. Williams has done a group of seven oils depicting Weston life as it was a hundred years back. He has caught the spirit and movement of those times with notable accuracy. The murals are academic in technique but pictorially are of absorbing interest to the people for whom, after all, they were made and whose tastes would rebel at the modernistic cryptograms of Orozco and Rivera. Mr. Williams has been wise in



making the murals serve the purpose for which they were designed. The work on the house still goes on and for it more money is being raised by giving plays, suppers, festivals and other entertainments. Some of the larger outlays of money have fortunately been met by the financial contributions of people like Mr. and Mrs. Lewis Parkhurst, and Mrs. Mary Clark Aker, descendants of early settlers.

The project is the sort of thing one would expect in a rich community near the city where the incentive would arise from people with unlimited money to afford professional town-planners, architects, interior decorators and contractors. But to have it come about in a Vermont hill village, to see the idea and its execution the product of purely native talent and initiative, and to have it carried out for utilitarian as well as historical and æsthetic purposes is interesting indeed.

Weston people are now turning their attention to a new project which is also an indication of how well they use their environment. They are building a playhouse. Or rather, rebuilding a church into one. As in many Vermont villages, putting on plays is one of the most ardent forms of entertainment. Being a dozen miles from the nearest movie, they are happily falling back on the old-time notion of entertaining themselves. On the Common stands one of the three Weston churches, this one without a pastor or congregation and long unused. The building was, this year, given to the Community Club and now plans are under way to use it for a playhouse. The building, a two-and-a-half-story edifice of generous width, is well suited to a theatre for it has a spacious, high-ceiling interior of about fifty by ninety feet and a balcony in back. With the addition

of a stage at the other end, and dressing rooms overhead, the removal of the rather dumpy steeple and the extension of the front portico over supporting pillars, the building will be transformed into a handsome structure harmonizing with the Community House, and making a playhouse for actual use. This playhouse, the alteration expenses of which are a gift of Mrs. Harriette D. Bailey, will be known as the Bailey Playhouse. Plans have been drawn by Raymond Austin, local architect and decorator, who is directing the rebuilding. An interesting feature will be the murals, to be painted by Le Roy Williams, and to depict the development of the American drama. The Playhouse expects to be ready for its opening night on June 1, 1935.

But the folk of Weston are thinking beyond the remodeling of the building and the making of the playhouse. They want to develop, if they can, a genuine, indigenous Vermont drama. Vermont once had the honor to produce the first American dramatist, Royall Tyler, who wrote, in *The Contrast*, the first American comedy to be played by American actors. It would be fitting once again for Vermont to add to the annals of the American stage with a movement fostering something exclusively American—plays unique to the region where they are produced: written, directed, acted and produced by Weston people. There may evolve here, as Walter Prichard Eaton has said might well evolve in Vermont, a new kind of theatre, drama and entertainment to enlist the whole-hearted participation of the people, players and audiences alike.

#### IV

But, lest our panegyrics be misconstrued, this article is *not* an invitation

to Weston. "My life," said Emerson, "is for itself, not for a spectacle." A general invitation to Weston, or to any other village that is finding its own salvation, would, were the invitation accepted, set into motion that law of diminishing human returns and wreak all kinds of havoc. If the utilization of worth while values in American life lies in the attempt of small communities to create a self-liquidating life of their own (to borrow a phrase from the R.F.C.), Weston is well on its way toward this ideal. But Weston has no monopoly on the movement. Neither has it the messianic complex which could make it believe these ideas a universal panacea for all human ills and try to convert the world. That the idea suffices for Weston is enough of a reason for carrying it out.

Weston folk, in restoring the old victualling house of 1797, are, perhaps, not so conscious of contributing to the antiquities of America as they are of making for themselves a functional and pleasant gathering place. But this will surely bring a clearer understanding of the past to the present because they are making use of both. In building a playhouse, not for movies, but for their own plays, they are not only making a contribution to the richness of their own lives, but are also providing themselves with an activity, after the entertainment is over, which will give them a satisfaction of having contributed to a movement of more permanent significance.

To live a whole human life, as Thoreau sought to do, is the real objective of mankind. A whole life is a good life. This can, as Lewis Mumford so ably points out, best come about from the forces of man's inner nature reacting on the activities of his daily routine.

But perhaps only a drop of this inner spirit is necessary to color the whole movement toward a symmetrical life. The forces due to the frontier spirit in America are now spent. Expansion is over. Standardization has come a cropper and ended in a sorry debacle. If we are to find a way out, we shall do so only by vision, imagination and a desire for more integral living. We shall have to contrive, in place of the outworn and stereotyped symbols, newer and more vital ones nearer the core of human needs and desires, and which haven't, as the old ones have, been observed for themselves instead of the things they stand for. And—lest these words sound too much like the preacher—we must get to work in an environment where we can be felt.

These are simple things. Americans, one would almost think, have a phobia of simplicity. They fear to take stock in a simple statement, or a simple philosophy because they suspect a "catch in it." There is no catch in what the people of Weston are attempting. It is simplicity itself. It is the making by these people, out of themselves, by themselves and for themselves, a full-rounded richer way of life. Hawthorne, I think it was, said he felt New England was as large a piece of ground as he could swear allegiance to. Perhaps the secret lies, for some, in selecting even a smaller area.

But if that, or any of these things, constitutes a secret, or a formula, the people in Weston don't realize it. It may be, for them, the kind of thing philosophers from Plato to Santayana have been talking about—the abundant life. But you won't hear those words in Weston. There they're doing, not talking.



# Recovery .

BY IRVING FINEMAN

## *A Story*

I NOTICED him when they let me out of bed and I took the first tottery turns in the long corridor. He would be at one end or the other: rocking in the glassed-in sunroom, or loitering by the nurse's desk under the light by the elevator. His room was down at that end.

Not that he looked interesting. Even from a distance he appeared quite commonplace. Though he was tall, broad-shouldered, with thick hair curling crisply in the sunlight or under the bright electric bulb. He was homely. But because he looked so robustly matter-of-fact, so ready to return to the hearty, out-door life he had obviously come from, he became for me an objective. I needed reassurance. In those first shaky essays at movement I still felt precariously alive. If I could once gain the end of the corridor and talk with that vigorous and ordinary young man, in the warmth of the sun or by the distant light where I could see him smiling at the nurses, I should begin to feel really safe. I needed to touch normal life. I had had a very close shave, within a flicker of death; had faced the dread of paralysis. . . . So, gathering my slowly returning powers, I ventured each day a bit farther along the shining linoleum, going now this way,

now that, depending on where he happened to be.

When I got near enough to the nurse's desk to distinguish their talk his voice was so husky—a hoarse whisper—I could not make out what he said; and he held his hand to his throat. Bronchitis, I thought. What else could be keeping the likes of him in a hospital? He might have been a lumber-jack, a seaman, a farmer, from the look of that rugged frame in a red flannel bathrobe.

And, finally, I achieved the sunroom. He was rocking slowly in one of those green-painted metal chairs; it squeaked under his weight. He never read. He was staring out onto an empty sunlit terrace. I was elated, with my achievement and with the look of spring in the yellow air, though the trees were still bare. I had pushed myself a bit far that day, had hurried for fear he might get up and go to the other end. I felt weakly warm but triumphant. There was reassurance in the set of that powerful back and thick red neck. "Good morning," I said and sat down.

He turned his head; his eyes, still absent-minded, smiled quickly. He raised his hand to his throat. There was a small silver plate fixed to his gullet. It had a small round hole in it. He pressed a finger to the hole and spoke.

"Mornin'," he said huskily. "How you feelin'?" I felt suddenly weak.

"Better," I said. "How are you?"

"Pretty good today," he whispered and dropped his hand.

I could not look at him without seeing the metal in his neck. It shone. I looked away to the stone bird-bath on the terrace. A sunny breeze wrinkled the water. His arm moved and he went on talking. He had seen a film of ice on the bird-bath that morning. But he guessed winter was licked. Spring was sure comin'. . . . I smelled spring in the cool air that eddied in under the door but I felt horribly weak, sick at heart.

"It won't be long and you'll be out in it now that you're up," he said. I nerved myself to look at him. He was smiling, very friendly, his large strong hand to his throat. It covered the plate. I said I had better be getting back to bed. "Better take it easy at first," he said, and went with me, slowly, to the door of my room, whispering hoarsely.

Alone, I tried to forget him but could not. I asked the young resident when he came on his evening rounds. Yes, he said, it was long standing. He had been there before. No need to ask was there any hope. Why would a man hang on? I knew very well what I should have done. The young doctor shrugged and smiled. "Forget it," he said, and went away.

## II

The next day the man was in the sunroom, waiting, because when I came out and turned the other way he overtook me as I moved toward the nurse's desk. "Take it easy. You're doin' just fine," he approved; and called my progress to the attention of the two nurses when we got there. The slim one was filling out charts. She lifted her

head long enough to say, not unkindly, "Got yourself a buddy now, so I guess you won't be kidding us any more."

"What d'you mean, no more kiddin'! Now how about a nice little dose of poison?" he whispered to the little round one who was portioning out doses at the medicine cabinet. She turned her head and laughed. It was clear from his look that he approved of her neat back and legs. It was cheerful there. You would never think there was anything much wrong with him. His face was brick-red in that light, like a farm-hand in summer. With the nurses laughing you could almost forget the thing in his neck. Nurses seem everlastingly healthy. I saw why he hung around them; as I had wanted to hang around him. It was pleasant there; but there was no place to sit down and rest and I soon tired standing, so when he went over to fool with the little nurse I turned back to my room.

The next day he was pacing the hall when I came out. There was nothing for it but to go with him to the sunroom and sit and look out on the terrace while he rocked and whispered. He hadn't expected to be staying this long. But they had to send away for a longer tube, and there was some delay in getting it. . . .

I was certainly doing fine, he said, considering the close shave I had had. He asked all about it. I made it brief, because you have to look at a man when you talk of yourself. And when I looked I could think only of that red malignance closing his windpipe, growing steadily downward. . . .

I was certainly getting well fast, he said. He wouldn't be surprised if I got out before he did; though the new tube should be coming any day now. And I felt it: that he was hanging on to me



for the same reason I had gone to him. I was on my way out, escaping. By clinging to some one climbing you might climb too. But he carried death with him, and I could not bear any weight; not yet. Nurses could; nurses were eternally healthy; death slid off their starched shoulders and disinfected hands. They were busy taking the burden of sickness and death, but I could see why that was not enough. They were cheering, but they were not climbing out. That was what you wanted. I had begun to climb. But I was too precariously weak yet to help any one, especially some one headed the other way, dragging down. . . . So I would look out into the cool golden sunlight, trying to think of other things, half listening to his husky talk of matters which, it seemed to me, should no longer have concerned him: politics, the depression, farming, tobacco—he had raised tobacco until this trouble got him. And one day after the plump little nurse had brought me my orange juice he watched her go down the long hall, and got started on women.

He liked a pretty woman. And they sure had pretty women nursin' these days. A man could do worse than marry a nurse. Some one who would look after you no matter what happened. Nothin' fazed a nurse. And they sure had pretty ones these days. His wife was mighty pretty but she had left him. In a way you couldn't hardly blame her. She wasn't like bein' a nurse. But she had drawn all the money out of their joint account and gone off with a no-account fellow. . . .

There are in life areas of calamity. You must be in a certain place at a certain time to suffer a certain misfortune: an earthquake, a collision, infection by some malignant germ. . . . In his pres-

ence I felt unescapable doom. Like a crippled man in a crumbling mine: if you stayed with him you were overwhelmed, you perished. And I needed reassurance in the certainty, the benevolence of life.

### III

The next day was warmer. He was sitting in the sunroom as when I first spoke to him, rocking to and fro and staring out. But he turned eagerly with his hand to his throat: "I've got a letter from my wife. That good-for-nothing she went with spent all the money and left her." I murmured something but did not sit down; pointed to the book I had brought and said I was going outside in the sun. He opened the door for me; sniffed the air and said tentatively, "Pretty cool, isn't it?" I dragged a chair to the protected corner against the sunroom and buried my nose in the book.

For a while I remained miserably aware of him sitting inside. Then I got interested in what I was reading, and after a while so absorbed that, disturbed by a steady creak, creak, creak, creak, I glanced around with unthinking annoyance and must have frowned through the glass before I realized it was his rocking-chair. He was looking at me. He stopped rocking at once. I returned to the book. The sun felt good on my head. . . . Long after, at the end of a chapter I looked up and thought how quiet it was. Inside, his chair stood still and empty. I leaned back, let the mild sun warmth fall on my face; breathed in the clean, sweet, sun-warmed air. . . .

Toward sunset I returned to my room and ate supper with relish. The doctor remarked that evening how much better I looked. And I felt so much stronger that before going to bed

I took another turn in the hall. It was after nine and the corridor was dark but for the light at the end. I walked to the desk and was surprised to find the little day-nurse busy with charts. She said she was starting on night duty. I asked for a glass of milk. She said she would bring it to my room, but I waited for her to come out of the pantry. She said, "Let me bring it to your room," but I took it from her hand and started to drink it there. We were alone and it was very quiet and I was feeling so set up, so really alive I wanted to chat with her a little. She was such a nice little thing, soft brown hair and eyes. But she did not seem in the mood; just stood waiting for the glass.

I was taking another drink when the door of the man's room opened and out came a low-wheeled stretcher guided by two men in black. Undertakers. The still form was swathed in a sheet neatly tucked in; you could make out the toes. As it rolled close by it struck me how slight, how insignificant a bundle a strong man made when dead—remembering his ruddy face, his shoulders, and the firm hand he raised to his neck. I couldn't move. In a soundless instant they had wheeled him into the elevator and he was gone.

I turned to the nurse. She was entering temperatures on the charts, drawing peaked lines from point to point.

"Pretty sudden, wasn't it?" I said.

"Yes," she answered. "You ought to be in bed," and spoke to another nurse who had come up from the floor below. In a minute they were laughing about something. It was remarkable—how such things slid off them. Of course they were right. As long as he was alive they had done their best; but the minute he died it was as if he had never existed. They were right. I set down the glass and went to bed. It took me a long while to fall asleep but I slept soundly.

In the morning I woke refreshed and told the colored boy I thought I could bathe myself. He was a very jolly boy and we talked as he rubbed me down. The alcohol made me feel fine. Suddenly I remembered the dead man, and felt sick and asked about him. The boy had gone to his room for something and found him at the point of death. He died easy. I asked: had the man taken the tube out? The boy screwed up his mouth. "It might'a come loose," he said; and observed what a fine day it was, fine and sunny and no wind. I got dressed and went out through the sun-room. The rocking-chair was standing still just as he left it. It made me a little weak. I felt like moving it with my foot. But I went on out on the terrace and sat in the sun. It was fine feeling the blessed warm sun on my face and hands.





# World Trade or Smash

BY SAMUEL LUBELL

*The extreme nationalism of today's world can not continue much longer, but to alter it may take a new war unless we quickly adopt saner courses*

ONCE again the world has arrived at the point where "a further drift toward economic nationalism must prove suicidal." From every country come reports that the sages in power deplore the mad mania for self-sufficiency, that they are utterly and profoundly convinced that recovery must spread beyond national frontiers to persist. Mr. Runciman has warned his colleagues that "the saturation point" in the development of the British market has been reached. The French have reduced their quota list as a come-on for liberalizing trade. Mussolini is fighting his second "Battle of the Lira," while no more willing buyer could be found in the entire world than Herr Dr. Schacht, economic Poo-Bah of all the Germanies. Even in the United States reciprocity is daily gaining converts and Secretary Hull is being invited to more business men's luncheons. Good news—if only one didn't recall that every great nationalist outburst has been preceded by just such unanimity for greater co-operation, that the more enlightened our politicians have seemed in the winter, the more disposed they have been to cut one another's throats in the summer.

So accustomed have we become to having our statesmen talk international and vote national that the perpetual candidacy of the tariff lowerer has assumed a Bryanite flavor. Nothing seems so dismally academic as "free trade," nothing so hopelessly evangelistic as a plea for world coöperation or international good will. Every nation has its Chinese Wall and almost every business man has a brick in that wall which he worships and guards as the protector of his vested interest. Never was it so difficult to do business with a foreign concern. Tariffs could be scaled, but quotas are harder to cope with, while licenses, import monopolies and currency regulations have made exporting a Lloyd's risk.

But before we "oh yeah" the efforts now being made to reduce trade barriers, before we give up all hope of reviving world trade, the changes that are being effected in world relations should be examined. In the decade and a half that the League of Nations has been attracting tourist school teachers to Geneva the entire world economy has been overhauled. If the dangers of collapse seem more imminent with the world market humpty-dumptyed into

nationalistic fragments, many factors which blocked economic coöperation in the past have been eliminated. Three trends stand out.

For one thing, most nations have practically exhausted their means for reducing the volume of foreign trade. In 1932 the "cyclical" depths seem to have been reached at about one-third the pre-depression level and since then, despite the rough-riding of a bitter currency war, international commerce has held its own. It would seem safe to predict that nothing short of a complete structural collapse or a sudden infectious spreading of "*Ersatz*," with every nation striving to reduce imports through the development of substitutes, could depress foreign trade much further.

Not only is the world being impelled closer and closer to the physical limitations of economic nationalism but simultaneously there has developed a growing concentration of power and responsibility in the hands of the state. Under *laissez-faire* the state served as a "policeman" and attained its highest usefulness when it acted as a messenger boy for capitalists. Much the same "liberalism" motivated the organization of the League of Nations and the International Labor Office. In some vague, haphazard manner the interests of workers and employers were to be harmonized irrespective of frontiers. But this atmosphere of talk has been brushed aside by the strong arm. Economics and politics have become so closely intertwined, the "totalitarian" principle has been adopted by so many nations—if not in law, in practice—that for the first time since the War "national interests" can be defined with some degree of accuracy. And so if economic nationalism is rapidly propelling us to the hard gravel bottom the neces-

sary concentrations of power exist to pull ourselves up again.

The third great change is that we have given up our efforts to create a super-economy of all the nations of the world as beyond our poor powers. Reciprocity, bi-lateral trade talks and regionalism are the slogans of the hour. That means of course the end of the world market—but that was blown to bits in No Man's Land and only the mirage of normalcy prevented our discovering the fact. The League of Nations was an eloquent plea for world organization but the mountains were too jagged and high and the plains too bumpy and depressed to permit a speedway to encircle the globe. For internationalism to have been successful would have required that the League be sufficiently strong, first to discipline various peoples to pay for the cost of the War and second to balance away some of the unevenness of capitalist development. Trade barriers and capital movements, standards of living and labor migrations would have had to be juggled "impartially" for the universal benefit of a mythically "international man." As long as War reconstruction went on and American loans poured into Europe the mirage could persist, but once the bubble burst the futility of such an effort became apparent.

Economic nationalism did not grow out of a blind refusal to recognize the interdependence of nations, but rather a world-wide desire to break away from so throttling an interrelationship. It was a case of *sauve qui peut*. The ship went down and with it two-thirds of the world's cargo. The survivors were washed up onto their desert islands. But few of us have proven Admirable Crichtons and the distress signals have been hoisted. True no world-state ship



hovers on the horizon, but efforts are being made to bring the desert islands closer together in two's and three's through the development of "regional" markets.

But in themselves these three factors, that world trade is practically at its "minimum," that governments have been entrusted with dictatorial powers and that some sort of feasible scheme for a higher-than-national organization of trade is being worked out, are no assurance of success. Every bad has its worse. What they do mean is that the clock hands are moving closer to the hour of decision. Either we are or we are not going to have world trade. To appreciate the alternatives let us analyze the three trends here outlined.

## II

With the Nazis trying to prove that Germans can eat less and wear fewer clothes than any people short of the Hottentots, the prospect of a further reduction in the volume of world trade must be considered. A world-wide "hunger strike" is by no means impossible. The present tendency of raising prices by restricting production has only to be accelerated sufficiently to provoke wide consumption shifts and an epidemic of "substitution." Cornering a raw material, as the Stevenson rubber restriction scheme proved, exerts a tremendous stimulus to competitive production. The post-War drive for agricultural self-sufficiency is a sorry demonstration of what occurs when to ordinary competitive instincts are added nationalistic fears and the need of debtor nations to reduce imports.

Our cotton control programme has already resulted in expanded acreages in foreign lands and reduced exports.

If the Canadian newsprint manufacturers raise their prices unduly a wave of tabloid newspapers might result. Pine-tree growing would be stimulated in the United States and some sort of chemical substitutes would be developed. Nazi Germany, of course, has been most spectacular in its "*Ersatz*" activities but Manchukuo is undertaking the liquefaction of coal into oil and a twenty per cent expansion in cotton acreage; while Henry Ford has embarked upon a programme designed to break China's control of tung oil production. Probably there isn't a single country in the world today whose chemists are not toiling in laboratories to reproduce "war" materials. Whatever successes are obtained must feed upon themselves like malignant tapeworms, reducing imports on one hand and aggravating surplus-restriction on the other.

But there still must remain a good many raw materials which simply will not be waved into existence no matter how feverish and frantic the politician's "presto." Even the United States with her "unlimited possibilities" could hardly find substitutes for much more than one-third of her present imports. Of more immediate importance than this physical minimum are capital limitations. The renunciation of the advantages of international specialization and volume marketing can only mean higher production costs. Uneconomic production is distinctly a privilege of the state. Capitalists, whatever their many shortcomings, are not fools enough to undertake "*Ersatz*" programmes on their own hook. Their yardstick is profits and not some political complex which we have misnamed "security."

But where are governments to secure

their funds for subsidizing the manufacture of synthetic gasoline, lignite, rubber or tin substitutes? Peter must be robbed if Paul is to dabble in chemicals. If the British are to stimulate domestic agriculture the subsidies must be reflected in higher food prices; if the French Government is to continue dumping wheat at a loss of about one dollar a bushel some other faction in society must make up this bounty. One inevitable result of "uneconomic production" is that a larger portion of the available capital is invested at home. For creditor nations to pursue such tactics means depriving debtors of vital foreign loans, causing them to erect more nationalistic defenses—precisely the sort of vicious circle from which we have been suffering these past five years. Any attempt to reduce the volume of world trade below its present "minimum" must mean an intensification of all those evils.

Priming private industry by a process of bootstrap nationalism is doomed to failure—unless complete socialization is resorted to. Obviously restriction of production through law is a very different economic process from the reduction of "surpluses" through the forcing of the marginal producer to the wall. In the latter event, unit production costs tend to decline as only the more efficient producers survive while under a system of paternalistic economics the debt structure, instead of being reduced through bankruptcies and forced sales, is actually swollen by a half-way efficiency in output. As the amount of capital involved in "uneconomic" production swells, the sphere of government enterprise must expand at the expense of private capital. From simple pump priming the state is inevitably forced to resort to subsidies. If the

second shot in the arm wears off, subsidies must be increased until the position of state and private capital become reversed—industry must prime the government pump—and the stage is set either for rigid deflation or inflation. That is so in Italy and to a growing extent in Germany. From inflation to socialization is just a hop, skip and jump.

But surely the bankers and capitalists are sufficiently powerful to make at least one great effort to revive international trade before the world goes completely Statist. Five years of depression can not have reduced all our captains of industry to the stature of mere privates. In countries like Italy where capital has always been meagre, or like Germany, already weakened by one inflation, capitalism may not have the strength to check the grindings of economic nationalism. But in Great Britain, whose very existence is bound up in world trade, or in the United States, with its amazing concentration of wealth in the hands of a few, the battle is bound to be fought. Or rather, I should say, is being fought, for Great Britain has already relaxed restrictions on foreign lending while the United States has similarly liberalized foreign exchange movements. A Soviet-United States debt accord has been reported, barter deals for stimulating cotton exports are being considered, business men are pressing for stabilization assurances, while the American Bankers Association has appointed a committee to coöperate with George N. Peek in setting the export credit bank really to work.

### III

A sincere effort to revive world trade will be made in the next few months,



but will it succeed? We have been chasing our tail so long that we have wound ourselves up like a spinning top, and now that we seem to have run down, there is so much dancing, whirling confusion about us that we hardly know which way to move first. Practically every government has been entrusted with sufficient powers to deal with this emergency—but the manner in which these powers have been concentrated is hardly one to inspire confidence in their being utilized wisely. Most of them have been accumulated through a process of retaliation, in an atmosphere of economic war. Fear has been a more potent factor in the rearing of those Chinese Walls than belligerency; while trade barriers have been in existence for so long that the ivy of bloc interests has entwined them.

Whatever hope still existed for restoring a competitive economy was shattered by the financial crash of 1931. No ordinary tariff could serve as an adequate defense against depreciated currencies. Quantitative restrictions became the vogue; quotas, licenses, exchange certificates, compulsory uses for domestic supplies and surtaxes replacing the old-fashioned tilting lances of the Hamiltonian protectionists. Many of these import restrictions implied the setting up of centralized bureaus in exporting countries, others merely provoked retaliation, but depreciated currencies marked the triumph of Statism in foreign affairs. Henceforth not individual costs but national price levels were to be the determining factor in deciding whether protection was needed or not. Ordinary trade wars could be reconciled with private trade. As long as a system of free exchangeability prevailed men could rival one another on the basis of price and quality, but man-

aged currencies meant the death of the private trader.

Only if a concern is prepared to establish a barter unit can it hope to continue to do business at the old stand, if the current trend toward foreign trade monopolies is brought to its logical conclusion. The German Farbenindustrie has done quite a bit of bartering in the last few years, and Sears Roebuck has announced its intention of creating some such "barter" unit. But international bartering must prove too cumbersome to be handled by individual concerns. Prices, tariffs, treaty provisions and exchange curbs would all have to be juggled and only government clearing houses could do that efficiently.

Barter, in this modern world, must sound fantastic and yet in the absence of a stable international exchange and—more important—of free capital movements in the form of international loans foreign trade can not possibly rise above that level, if not in form in principle. If nations will sell they must buy. The only bridges for trade unevenness are tourist expenditures, immigrant remittances and, above all, capital loans. Only through a world-wide expansion of capital investment, through permitting backward nations to be developed and to create their own capital equipment can the volume of trade be accelerated. Barter has the advantage of doing away with the time element between shipment and payment, of guaranteeing the minimum of essential imports despite an absence of credit arrangements. But by its very nature barter is a leveling process; almost inevitably it would tend more toward depressing imports to their *sine qua non* level rather than relieve exportable "surpluses." Statism would be given a triple impetus, through the greater

need for import, export and internal control; "*Ersatz*" would be stepped up, and more capital wasted until a war of price levels must ensue.

Assuming that the internal price level is brought under control, as the national planners desire, that trade barriers are elevated to such heights that all importations save these which can not be produced within the country are kept out, the maintenance of that domestic price level becomes once again a question of correlating supply and demand. Since the proportion of uneconomic production must become so great as to forbid any rise in domestic purchasing power and hence demand, supply must be curtailed. Exports must be forced with a consequent sharpening of the struggle for world markets until war breaks out.

That is the great danger in barter, reciprocity and bi-lateral trade talks, that the net result may be a sharpening of existing trade conflict, a leveling down of imports to the "war" minimum. Tariff bargaining has been tried in the past. But always the process has meant a padding in advance and a trading of concessions with the net result of higher levels all around. Reciprocity, after all, implies discrimination and one pair of Yankee traders may find their efforts nullified by the swaps of other countries. With all power centralized in the hands of a few, with individual producers reduced to insignificance, and "security," not costs, serving as a yardstick, the dangers of rampant sovereignty are aggravated. To insist upon the maintenance of an economic Kellogg Pact will not insure peace, for already the most-favored-nation clause has been "Japanesed" scores of times. If reciprocity is to be converted from the mutual retaliation

which it has been in the past to an opening wedge for a general revival of world trade, bi-lateral treaties must be developed in line with a consistent policy. They must be supplemented by foreign loans and be assured of a greater permanence than casual street peddling—and that would mean the development of fairly integrated regional markets.

#### IV

But are "regional" markets really within grasp or must they prove as much of a mirage as a super-world-economy? Great Britain, with her characteristic wisdom in international affairs, has been most successful in blazing the trail. Not all of the Ottawa pacts for imperial preferences have worked out smoothly, yet on the whole the results have been gratifying. In the first eight months of 1934 Britain's exports to Empire countries increased by more than \$60,000,000 or 14.2 per cent, while exports to other nations increased by only \$13,750,000 or 2.9 per cent. For the first time Empire exports exceeded those to nations outside.

If to these Empire gains are added the trade increases with Argentine and the Scandinavian countries the possibilities of "a sterling area" become even more impressive. Last year sixty-seven per cent of Denmark's exports went to the United Kingdom while for the first half of this year the Danes bought twenty-six per cent more British goods than in prosperous 1929. Nearly one-fourth of Norway's trade, consisting chiefly of exchanges of wood pulp, paper, herrings and agricultural products for textiles, coal and machinery, is with the British Empire. Swedes have been exhorted to "Buy British" if unable to "Buy Swedish" and the volume



of trade on both sides of the ledger has swelled. About one-third of Argentine's exports go to Great Britain, including almost two-thirds of Britain's beef imports. To clinch these mutual trade advantages the currencies of the various countries have all been traditionally linked. London has been their chief centre of finance and recently the bar on foreign loans was lifted within this "sterling area."

With methods almost diametrically opposed to those of the British, but with perhaps even more success, Japan has asserted her dominance over her "Monroe Doctrine" area. Her trade in these well-established Asiatic markets has already passed the 1929 level, while Manchukuo is being turned into a sort of monopoly laboratory. Plans for controlling oil, tobacco, automobiles, steel tubing, cement and life insurance have already been announced. In part they are spurs to recognition, but they also represent a systematic upbuilding of a real "first line of defense." In the Far East Japan's future would seem unchallenged. It will be years before the Soviets will have developed sufficiently for them to become a serious industrial competitor, and Japan's enormous network of investments should give her an edge even then. But the Nipponese trade expansion has not been confined to her doorstep markets. Her cotton goods have found their way in increasing quantities into Latin America, the Near East, Africa and Oceania, where she has trod upon the toes of Great Britain, the United States, Germany and other powers.

In Europe prospects for regional economic groupings are hardly sanguine; yet nowhere is the need so evident. Here politics and economics have become hopelessly muddled. War

hatreds, nationalism, swastikas, fasces, treaty revision and *Anschluss* are being mixed with agrarianism, autarchy and protectionism so that almost the sole solution would seem to be through the sword. Like the British the French sought to develop their colonies into an "empire" but the effort has fallen short and France has turned to trade expansion through "gold bloc" preferences. The coöperation of the central banks of these gold standard countries has been sufficiently effective to serve as a base for a real regional grouping but the political obstacles are so great that it could hardly prove to be the stepping stone to a Greater Europe.

The logical power to weld Central Europe into a unified trade bloc is Germany. In all Europe the Reich is the only nation whose industries are sufficiently developed to consume *Mittel-europa's* raw materials; Germany alone has the dynamic power required to lift agricultural Danubia out of its misery. Significantly, since Hitler's rise to the throne the old ties that bound Poland and Jugoslavia to France have been weakened; while Mussolini has been forced to do everything but buy up Austria to preserve her fickle allegiance.

This battle for Danubian supremacy between Europe's two leading dictators has pulled apart the little that had been accomplished in linking the Little Entente nations into a single trade bloc. For months Hamburg and Trieste have been waging a bitter rate war for Czechoslovakian trade. Italy has managed to divert some Czech shipments but the Elbe remains the cheapest route to the sea and the Nazis have appropriated 130,000,000 marks to make it navigable all year round. A Nazi agreement to absorb all the oil seeds that Hungary could produce was timed to coincide

with Mussolini's Italian-Austro-Hungarian trade treaties; while Jugoslavia's antipathies to Italy have been whetted by a German economic pact. Poland and Germany have buried the hatchet. The Danzig situation has been eased while the new trade agreements for the exchange of agricultural products and raw materials for German manufacture will step up Poland's trade with the Reich to four times that with France. But the political obstacles to *Mittleuropa* need no recounting. Italy alone could not block the Reich, but France may prove just strong enough to checkmate German expansion.

# V

All these obstacles in the way of a revival of world trade are clearly reflected in America's position. No nation is so squarely confronted with the necessity of making a choice between world trade or smash. Secretary Wallace has pointed out the sacrifices that extreme nationalism must involve—the removal from production of forty to one hundred million acres, the regimentation of public opinion and economic life. If anything he has underestimated the sacrifices, for if America goes the whole hog towards nationalism war in Europe can not be averted. For the richest creditor nation in the world to shirk its responsibilities must mean an intensification of all the violently nationalistic evils that have afflicted the post-war world.

Eighteen months of bootstrap nationalism have brought us a deadlock between rising prices and stagnating wages. At present price levels the farmer is receiving the maximum share of the consumer's dollar. If he is to receive the added income which he needs

so badly it can come only through foreign sales or increased urban purchasing power, only by relaxing foreign curbs or greater public expenditures, subsidies, regimentation, inflation, Statism and war. Characteristically the President has sought to do both, to prime both foreign and urban purchasing power. But the time for compromise is limited. America must choose or drift into ruin. We must make up our minds what it is we shall produce at home and what we intend to purchase abroad. We must discipline our "bloc" interests to this consistent national policy and we must set about to build a regional market that will supply us with the major share of our imports in return for capital loans and exports. Dollar devaluation is simply begging the question. By cheapening our money we have managed to stimulate exports, but we might just as well have dumped a "loan" abroad and the gold outflow our policy has caused has aggravated Europe's condition.

The world is rapidly approaching the absolute minimum below which foreign trade can not be pushed without bringing us to the brink of war. If economic recovery is to continue a higher-than-national organization of trade must be achieved. Never has a world enjoyed a productive capacity comparable to ours. The effort to restrict our Promethean industrialism to nationalistic straitjackets is doomed to failure. The roaring dynamos that have tottered theocracies and monarchies will also shatter autarchies. The world has only a choice of method. Either it conquers its many conflicting interests and revives world trade, or the higher unity without which our civilization can not endure will be built out of the ruins of the next war.



# "What Else Did Father Do?"

BY FRANCIS RUFUS BELLAMY

*Many men and women have hobbies, but the most satisfying ones require a peculiar mental slant that few possess*

FIFTEEN years ago Edward Bok quit his job on the *Ladies Home Journal*—he was the most successful editor in America—to prove his belief that the greatest satisfaction in life comes not from money but from pursuing a constructive interest. In the ten years before he died he wrote six books, built his Singing Tower Sanctuary in Florida, created the Philadelphia and Harvard Awards, put the Philadelphia orchestra on its feet and through his American Foundation began a series of notable contributions to the cause of world peace. Even his enemies admitted that he proved his point, in a decade when the making of money overshadowed everything else.

To the public, however, Bok always remained simply a rich man who could afford to be interested in unusual affairs. His money obscured the fact that he had hold of something vital—a principle applicable to everybody; something far removed from the usual conception of a hobby.

Recently I was in a country house in New England which, by contrast, made that principle stand out in bold relief. The place was fitted up like a ship. Over the narrow doorways were the familiar blue and white signs you see on ocean

liners: Royal Suite, Dining Saloon, Stateroom, Captain's Cabin. This last was the owner's and was fixed up in every detail like the cabin of a real skipper. Hundreds of dollars' worth of navigating instruments filled the small room with the bunk-like bed. A speaking tube ran down to the kitchen below, where the Chief Engineer's dial was attached to the wall. Outside, on a narrow balcony overlooking the inland hills was the ship's bridge, complete even to the bronze bell and clapper and the rough rubber treads on the ladder.

The place was at once tragic and illuminating. Product of much money, it was totally divorced from reality. By no possible stretch of the imagination could it be of any use except to its vanished owner. The very fact of its obvious uselessness made the principle Bok strove for stand out sharp and clear.

Twelve years ago an American woman living in Vevey, Switzerland, lost her favorite dog, Hans. To remedy the loss she bought four of the most intelligent German shepherd dogs she could find and started to breed them. She hoped to develop another Hans. Instead, with the help of a Westerner skilled in animal breeding, she developed a breeding kennels. She supplied

dogs to the Swiss police, customs and army. Breeding was the point: she had always been interested in animals. So far, her interest constituted a hobby, little different from a thousand other hobbies.

In 1923, however, her ideas were given a totally new twist. On a visit to Germany she saw the amazing uses to which the Germans were putting their shepherd dogs as guides for ex-soldiers blinded in the War. Across streets, under awnings, through traffic, into stores, barber shops, trains and trams went sightless Germans led by dogs—blind people possessed of a freedom and independence only to be appreciated by those who have sat helpless, dependent and despairing in the dark. The dogs were like eyes to them.

Thus, eleven years ago, Dorothy Harrison Eustis became absorbed in what could be done to help the blind in other countries. Today, over a thousand dogs have graduated from her training kennels in Morristown, New Jersey, and are acting as guides to blind clergymen, lawyers, insurance men, canvassers, newsstand owners and plain men and women. Into the work each year go \$64,000, contributed by friends. Breeding has been given up, and fine German shepherd dogs are purchased or accepted as gifts for training. One hundred dogs were turned out this year. A class of trainers is being started in order to increase production, a difficult matter. It takes three months to train a dog; fours years are required to make a dog trainer. A first-class one must be able to handle dogs, understand the needs of the blind and be able to teach what he knows.

So far as the blind are concerned, next to the invention of Braille, the work of the Seeing Eye, as Mrs.

Eustis calls her kennels, holds out more hope than any other single effort. Where Mrs. Eustis herself is concerned, she has fashioned out of what was an ordinary hobby one of the most interesting lives imaginable.

Here is another illustration.

Most of us are interested in the theatre. Some of us collect theatre programmes, volumes of plays, pictures of Thespians. A few of us even buy seats regularly at our community theatre. Up in North Dakota, however, there is an instructor in English who puts us all in the shade. His enthusiasm is the theatre, too. But in the last twenty-five years he has made it possible for a whole State to participate in the theatricals.

Twenty-five years ago he came from Wisconsin to become an instructor at the North Dakota Agricultural College. All he had to show for his interest in the stage was three dog-eared plays in which he had acted back home. A school teacher wrote for his help in giving an entertainment and he sent her the well worn plays. She was grateful and told a friend. The friend told a friend. Soon people all over the State were asking him for help. He got everything he could for everybody in the way of drama; then he attacked the problem of putting auditoriums in the school houses.

His name is Alfred Alvord. At his command at this moment he has a circulating library of thousands of plays, pageants and rodeos, with photographs of the costumes and settings and everything that an amateur producer needs to know. His college lends them freely to individuals, community clubs and teachers. He has taught his whole State to play. Thirty-five counties observe Play Day once a year. Scarcely a school-house lacks a stage. Dozens of commu-



nity clubs have built new halls or remodeled old ones. One pageant recently boasted 1,500 actors; 400 students throng his classes; 100,000 Dakotans have taken part in pageants he has encouraged or written or produced. The Fargo Bowl is his final achievement. He saw it a smoking refuse dump, sloping down to the river, with trees as a back drop and a river bank behind for a dressing room. He labored day in and day out until he persuaded the city to take it and make of it one of the most beautiful natural amphitheatres in the world.

Needless to say, he has done all this without any personal fortune. His hobby—if you can call it that—has made him thousands of friends and enriched a whole State. He has had that magical twist which consists in looking outwards, not inwards, in the expression of a personal interest.

## II

Some of our most prized institutions have sprung from that same quality. Sixty years ago there was a Union Theological student who loved the woods and brooks of the country and went to New York's East Side for his first pastorate. Two years later he was called to the little town of Sherman in the beautiful Pennsylvania hills. There, the difference between childhood in the tenements and on the countryside struck him like a blow in the face. He preached his first sermon on the text, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these, my brethren, ye have done it unto me." As a result, sixty children from the East Side were invited to spend a summer vacation in the homes around Sherman.

So great was the popularity of the visitors that the next year 1,000 were invited—and the railroad fare rose be-

yond the purse of Willard Parsons and his congregation. So one day he walked into the office of the old New York *Tribune* and asked for Whitelaw Reid, the owner. Reid put up the money for the tickets and gave the project free space in his paper. "Let's call it the Fresh Air Fund," said Parsons. "Make it a yearly thing. Let everybody join us in buying a child a trip to the country."

That was sixty years ago. To date, 568,201 city children, ranging in age from six to sixteen, have had summer vacations in New England, New York, Pennsylvania and New Jersey, even as far south as Maryland, as a result of that first inspiration of Willard Parsons. Last summer, despite the depression, committees in nearly 500 towns—they are called Friendly Towns—gave 14,562 boys and girls the refreshing air of the country and sent them back that much better able to face life in the tenements. It is a help which people can appreciate only if they have seen tenement children—they average six to a family—wilt and droop under the stifling heat of an unbroken New York summer. In addition to the placements in individual homes, eight camps were built, more than 7,000 persons giving the money contributed. The average cost for those children who went to homes was only five dollars, due to the aid of the railways which coöperated by selling tickets at one-quarter the usual rate.

It is a fact, of course, that a man can not command his enthusiasms and interests, any more than he can order his friendship and affections. He can not say: "Go to! I will now become absorbed in this! I will now go out and do that!" But all of us have an interest of some sort. I know a doctor in Mary-

land whose little girl died from pneumonia contracted in a one-teacher country schoolhouse. She sat in the draught of a broken window in the poorly ventilated building—and there were no school nurses. Her father did not nurse his grief; he got himself on the school board, began to raise money and in the fourteen years since he has wiped out every one-teacher schoolhouse in his county, replaced them with new modern buildings and installed school nurses.

Up in Traverse City, Michigan, there used to be an old circus man—he may be there yet for all I know—who retired after thirty years on the road, had himself elected a city commissioner and promptly proceeded to establish one of the finest zoos and aquariums in the State: a real drawing card for tourists to Traverse City as well as a source of education and pleasure to the town itself.

There is a 240-acre public park in the little town of Abilene, Kansas, that is solely the result of one man's interest in play. The place was his farm. He

landscaped it with a huge artificial lake, dotted it with sand bathing beaches, golf links, Boy and Girl Scout camps and a full-size New England whaler built to specifications—and then erected, overlooking it all, a home for the aged with broad verandas, a library and an auditorium. He had play enough doing it to last him his lifetime.

None of these men was originally or chiefly interested in dogs or theatricals or tenement children. But they had the twist that leads to human service rather than self-centredness. Many a breeder of dogs remains that and nothing more, while Mrs. Eustis has built the Seeing Eye. Many a professor of English still finds satisfaction in his library for all his interest in the drama, while North Dakota boasts of Fargo Bowl. More than one lover of woods and brooks and children spends his summers gazing alone at the beauties of nature.

Edward Bok had a real idea. How many others are there who share it, and apply it? "What Else Did Father Do?" he called it. Isn't it time somebody else gave it a name?







# No More Sun Porches for Frogs

BY PAUL B. WILLIAMS

*The unemployed must be cared for despite mounting debts; but the system can and should be improved; here are some concrete suggestions*

SOMETIMES a casual remark hits off a situation better than all the learned reports of eminent experts. Fred J. Rath, former mayor of Utica, New York, who runs a garage and knows what people talk about, made such a remark last summer. The Common Council was debating another bond issue for relief. It was groaning between the pressures of supporting ten per cent of the city's population and the need for keeping within the bonded debt limit.

Mr. Rath, with the practical pertness which is frequently admired by his fellow townsmen, entered into an argument about the wisdom of further appropriations for work relief, which then consisted rather generally of rip-rap retaining walls along banks of creeks flowing through Utica. "It's all right to feed folks who are hungry," he declared, "but let's quit building sun porches for frogs."

That remark swept the town. Notwithstanding its hilarious expression it reflected the general distrust of "work" projects upon which more men were employed than could be used effectively. The dubious value of public works which cost more than they were

worth and the questionable benefit in morale to the workers themselves, who knew the fictitious character of much that they were doing, were revealed in Mr. Rath's somewhat cynical description of what had been done. The stone-work along the creeks wasn't too bad, at that, from an engineering standpoint, but calling it "sun porches for frogs" was a pretty pat way of showing up the amazing futility of much work relief.

The situation is no better as this is written some months later. In fact it is worse, if anything, because the city is several hundred thousand dollars closer to its debt limit and the poor are still with us. Moreover, the city has an association of one-time CWA workers, formed when they went on strike against relief "wages" last spring, a delinquent tax list the largest in its history, property owners who sincerely doubt whether recovery can come soon enough to bail them out of their troubles, and a conviction on the part of many that relief is a racket.

This has come about despite the fact that Utica has had better than average administration of relief. It was ahead of the country by raising money five years ago, by popular subscription, to finance

work projects, pay unemployed wages and thus keep them off relief rolls. There has been a minimum of political interference, little scandal and an honest effort by competent individuals, serving without pay, to secure compliance with the rulings of the FERA, TERA, PWA, CWA and other agencies, which have flowed in steady—and contradictory—streams from the many offices of issue. The point is that having started with a faith in work relief, long before the Government thought it up, having tried it patiently, honestly and consistently, Utica now thinks that it is neither work nor relief. Like the little girl we say, "It's spinach and to hell with it."

This article, therefore, is an attempt to explain why such a shift of opinion has occurred and suggest methods of procedure which may avoid some of the difficulties in which the administration of relief now flounders. It quotes few statistics, no conference reports, no commission findings and none of the other details with which this whole subject is cluttered. It represents, however, conclusions based upon long and wearing experience in trying to reconcile the conflicting viewpoints which underlie present efforts to solve this problem. Although it covers operations in one city in one State it probably represents better than average experience for the country as a whole, because of the known excellence of New York State's procedure under its Temporary Emergency Relief Administration.

## II

So it comes down to this text: the public can not finance enough work to constitute complete relief of unemployment. It can not come within speaking distance of doing so and the sooner that

fact is comprehended and work and relief are put into separate categories, the better it will be for every one. Proof? Consider these figures. In 1929 Utica's industrial payroll was \$17,000,000. In accordance with national experience this figure had declined forty per cent by 1931, when the payroll was \$10,125,012. In 1933, according to the Federal census reports just issued, this had again been reduced, to \$7,474,176.

That was the period during which the shotgun attack of the CWA began to scatter Federal money around the landscape. Utica got its share and at one time the relief committee was the largest employer of labor in the city, with a weekly payroll of \$62,000. But even the fabulous billions of Washington can not long survive such open-handed distribution and by spring people knew that Christmas had come and gone. The CWA workers struck when the committee cut their pay from fifty cents to forty cents an hour and then by groups were laid off as State and Federal money dwindled.

So what? Assume that the CWA programme of \$62,000 a week—which did *not* hire all unemployed—could have continued for a year. It would have provided \$3,250,000 to add to the \$7,500,000 being paid in regular employment. The total would have been about eleven millions, still \$6,000,000 *less* than the city's industrial payroll of 1929. Neither Uncle Sam nor Father Utica can make up that difference and remain solvent. That's why some Uticans quake when they read F.D.R. dispatches from Washington. They think the letters mean Financing Doesn't Relieve.

The tragedy is that as we approach the fifth winter of our discontent relief rolls are still high, despite fairly good



industrial conditions. Our relief administrators still expect us to putter along with the same old devices which, at best, have fallen far short of success. Meanwhile, the practical members of the Common Council who have to live with the voters, ask with pardonable exasperation when another relief bond issue is requested: "What are we going to use for money?" It was at least a curious coincidence that the mayor and the finance committee conferred about this subject Armistice Day. Are relief debts destined to be the domestic successors of the War debts?

They need not become so if the public once understands that the cost of work relief, per client, is double that of home relief and that it is a large question whether the works produced by this employment are worth the excess cost. If the public will study the evidence enough to convince itself that this is so, it will then be ready to insist that the two operations be separated.

This involves a revision of much current thinking about relief. The first proposition to be accepted is that the problem is no longer temporary. Almost all informed discussion of the condition regards it as one of long duration. There is no prospect of a resumption of employment on a scale which will wipe out the present lists of unemployed. The next point to bear in mind is the probability that most persons, now workless and fifty-five years old or more, will never again have regular jobs. Some of them may find places, of course. The bulk of them never can.

According to Washington dispatches which are laying the groundwork for the winter's legislative programme, these two basic facts seem to be in the minds of some Administration advisers. Talk of economic security, of old age

pensions and of unemployment insurance must be based upon such conclusions. They point the way out of many present difficulties.

They suggest, for instance, that the first thing to be done is to classify all clients on relief rolls, in accordance with their ages. Those more than fifty-five, if that age is accepted as the deadline, must be put over on some form of stated relief. Once their eligibility for relief is ascertained, they should be relieved from much of the miscellaneous questioning which makes "being investigated" a nightmare to many decent folk. There is no use in having social workers bother elderly persons, whose habits are fixed, whose productive possibility is low and whose value to society is diminishing rather than increasing. Government should pay those who need it a minimum cash allowance and be done with it.

Along with this, there is another step to be taken in the retirement from industry of the elderly. Not the aged. The defrosting process must begin with those in their fifties, whose family responsibilities are on a declining scale but who by hanging onto their jobs block the way for the younger and more aggressive. This sounds harsh, and temporarily it will be hard on some persons. But surgery involves blood-letting and there is no way to get rid of this cancer except by cutting.

In this section, for instance, few railroad men can get a regular run unless they have at least twenty years' service. That means that the energetic, ambitious, competent men in their thirties and forties, who might be revivifying that business, are hanging around, hopefully waiting to be summoned by a call-boy, while the old timers get the runs. No matter how good their intentions

or how excellent their records, they are actually termites who riddle the fabric of any business which has too many of them.

Returning to the relief rolls, the next step should be to set aside the younger age group, including ages perhaps from eighteen to twenty-five. For the youths nothing better has been devised than the CCC camps. This enterprise has more public support and promises more substantial benefit for the nation's future than any one undertaking in the name of relief. It offers tremendous possibilities for improving the physical assets of the United States at reasonable cost. It affords also a training, physically, mentally and spiritually, which can be highly beneficial to the young men it serves. Unfortunately, no comparable activity has been developed for girls. They should not be ignored.

Having taken off the present unwieldy relief rolls the groups represented by the younger and older age brackets, we still have a number, perhaps half of the present totals, between the ages of twenty-five and fifty-five. Most of these are married men, with families. Their children are in the formative period, during which the kindly counsel of competent social workers can be influential. They are worth working for and with, if we have an eye to the future.

But of this group it must be said that still another classification must be made. By no means is it all able-bodied, vigorous and competent. Mental quirks affect some. Physical disability handicaps others. Speaking of availability for the kinds of construction usually contemplated in public works, a large percentage of these recipients of relief will be found unemployable. That number has to be ascertained by the closest kind of

investigation. It looks into the man's record as a relief case, his home, his bank account if any, his record with employers. It attempts to ascertain whether he is willing and able to work—at the kind of jobs the public can offer him.

If the answer is "No," that man must then be made a public charge, with the probability that he will continue so. It is a dismal outlook for his family, because his allowance should be kept at a level low enough to make the condition unattractive. Suffering can be avoided. Facilities exist or can be provided which will ensure decent medical care for children and a reasonable education. Good social counsel will continually urge the man to get on his own feet and will strive to give the children some flash of ambition, which may eventually become the spark that sets all self-starters in motion. It is with this group that the real field lies for accomplishment by skilled and sympathetic social workers.

### III

Now what about the men between twenty-five and fifty-five, now on relief rolls, who can be classified as employable, still thinking for the most part in terms of their availability for the heavier kinds of outdoor work? For the time being they must be supported, much as they are living now—at public expense. But within a reasonably short period there is a way by which many of them might be returned to private employment.

Here it is necessary to digress for a moment, to point out two influences which have blocked many worthy local efforts to have work relief make sense. The first is the piecemeal character of the financing which has driven local



committees crazy, trying to schedule operations with some regard for efficiency but being unable to do so because they never knew what the next month's allocation of funds might be. This has caused them to tell tall stories of local needs, on the assumption that they might get half what they sought from State or Federal authorities. It has kept workers unsettled, in fear of the intermittent lay-offs and the pushing around they then had to undergo to get transferred from work relief to home relief rolls. It has made foremen slipshod and led engineers to speak in the short and simple words of their calling, which are used also in the Bible. And it is the most extravagant way known to man to carry on most kinds of construction.

Along with this instalment method of handing out monthly allocations of relief funds has come in the inevitable intervention of State and/or Federal authority in local projects. Of course, it is reasonable to argue that the provider of the money should have something to say about its use. But the argument wears a little thin when laborers tearing up street car tracks in Blandina Street, Utica, are paid off with United States Treasury cheques. It becomes almost ludicrous when the rigmarole of government accounting is unfolded in all its glory, of standard form, vouchers (in quadruplicate which somebody has to file), rules, orders, interpretations and exceptions. The TERA, bless its systematic heart, was up to Rule No. 246 on October 30, with more to come.

The PWA is no better. On November 7, 1934, was laid the cornerstone of a high school for which Utica had a PWA grant. Eighteen months earlier city officials had begun their long and dusty hunt for Federal funds. Plans had been in existence for more than

three years, based upon a report of experts from Teachers College, Columbia University, of the need for the school. The city owned its site. All it needed was money. But when the Government put up the money it also began to tinker with the plans. Today the project makes architects toss in their sleep and contractors swear at their help.

To the simple minds of the taxpayers of Utica who have been running their city for more than a century, the fact seems to be clear that they know more about their own school requirements than any official, no matter how conscientious, stuck in his office in Washington, D. C. That is why they maintain that if the Federal Government wants to help municipalities, its simplest and most efficient procedure would be to credit them with such drawing account as the project warranted, and then let local officials spend the money under the restrictions which their own community imposes.

That brings up the second flaw in procedure, which explains much current dissatisfaction with work relief. It involves the kind of projects upon which this money is spent and the method of their execution. Probably the worst of the leaf-raking episodes are past but every one responsible for work relief has a headache when he contemplates the miscellaneous mess of projects on which men have wasted time and the taxpayer's money.

Enough evidence has accumulated so that a competent engineering board could select here, for instance, a million dollars' worth of public construction which is worth doing. Once those are scheduled in the order of their importance and grants of Federal and/or State money made to supplement the local financing, public works could be

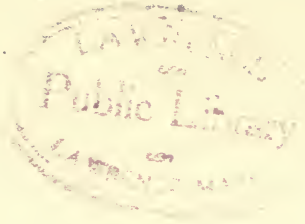
undertaken in an orderly way. There would be no more such insulting performances as having men dig ditches—with dynamite—at twenty below zero. Every such job would have an estimate of cost. It would be let by bidding, to *private contractors*.

Here the forgotten man, who is still on a relief roll, gets his chance. When he was shown to be "employable" by the inquiry previously mentioned, his name automatically went on the records of the public employment office in his vicinity. The contractor who has been awarded a job has read in his specifications that he must hire his help through that office. He has read that he must include a certain percentage of those receiving relief. He has read that he will be paid a bonus for so doing, this being a percentage of the wages he pays them, as shown by his payrolls.

When he is ready to start work, he secures a list of qualified men from the employment office, with the relief clients noted. He hires the ones he wants, fires those who fail to make good, and builds up a force as under normal conditions, maintaining always the percentage of relief clients. The public pays him the bonus for getting these men off relief rolls and back into private employment. It is to be hoped that as the pick-up of business in consumer goods follows the resumption of activity in the heavy industries allied to construction, others on relief will find their places as book-keepers, clerks and salesmen. But there will be an end of the ridiculous brutality of having a 110-pound tailor try to swing a pick and shovel—in the name of work relief. And presumably, there will be fewer sun porches for frogs.







# The Kingdom of the Thais

BY VIRGINIA CREED

*The astute little King of Siam, who appears every now and then in America, could give a lesson in diplomacy to many more influential rulers*

IF PRAJADIPOK, King of Siam, Buddha's Prince, Brother of the Moon, Supreme Arbiter of the Ebb and Flow of the Tides, had come into this world blessed with strong eyes, it is doubtful if Americans would ever have heard of Siam at all once geography classes were left behind. His Majesty, however, arrived for medical treatment; we learned about the white elephants, that are not, alas, white, looked with casual interest at the fantastic postage stamps, shook our democratic heads over the life-and-death autocracy of the diminutive Oriental monarch and passed on to more personal concerns. Our knowledge of distant nations usually varies in inverse ratio with the degree of security and happiness enjoyed by the inhabitants thereof. So it has been with Siam. The party of which I was a member arrived in Bangkok with a vague curiosity about the country, engendered, no doubt, by the fact that Siam lies some fifteen hundred miles off the beaten track of world travel. Deserting a world cruise for less stereotyped adventures, we shortly discovered that this little kingdom of about three-quarters the size of Texas, harboring a population approximately

that of New York City, is not only the most pleasant country in the Far East but offers a variety of reflections to all types of observers, including serious students of political evolution, connoisseurs of the exotic and laggards whose main concern is how to conduct their lives with a maximum of enjoyment and a minimum of effort.

Not unnaturally, our position as the king's guests led us immediately into a preoccupation with the manners and personalities of the court. At first we were content to bask in the grandeur that surrounds royalty while we observed the superficial exoticisms of life in an Oriental, tropical and almost completely Buddhist country. Since I occupied part of the Queen's former apartments, her tastes engaged me for a time. I enjoyed the sunken marble bath she had once used, heard with satisfaction that her frocks came from Paris and that she played nearly as good a game of golf as the King. The native costume, the ever-present *panung*, was a source of singular delight to us. It consists of three yards of material arranged like a skirt hitched up in front and is worn by courtier and servant, man and woman alike, with the excep-

tion of the ladies of the court who go to functions arrayed in Chanel, Patou and other French originals. We exclaimed over the idyllic nature of native life as witnessed on the *klongs*, devised elaborate schemes designed to find out whether or not the gigantic Sikh bodyguards assigned to us ever sat down during the night, marveled at the positive mania prevalent among the aristocracy for taking motion pictures, and were pleased to have our sense of credulity strained a dozen times a day.

After a time, however, we ceased to shrink from the swarms of transparent lizards that cover the walls, performing the useful function of eating the dread anopheles mosquito, were no longer disconcerted by the larger red lizards who dwell in the gardens and have an annoying habit of "laughing" whenever human conversation lags. Our more serious curiosity began to reassert itself as the initial novelty wore off. We took to questioning the young princes delegated to take us sight-seeing. From them we learned many facts which we were later able to verify and supplement on our trips up-country.

## II

It soon became apparent to us that, despite court lavishness and aristocratic manifestations of glory, the Kingdom *Muang Thai*, or Land of the Free, is governed for the people if not by them. Under the rule of the Chakkri dynasty, of which Prajadipok is the fifth reigning member, every step has been taken with the people in mind. Theoretically they do not own the land; it belongs to the king in feudal fashion. Actually the Chakkri kings appear always to have regarded it as a sort of estate which they hold in trust for their subjects. The estate thus administered by them is con-

siderable, for Siam is well endowed with natural resources.

The mountains of the north yield fortunes in teak; the central plain produces one million tons of rice annually for export alone; the mining sections of the southeast are rich in tin, coal, iron, wolfram and tungsten. Furthermore, all through the steaming jungle regions and productive central plain the tropical vegetation supplies the natives with a bewildering variety of fruit, while the tributaries of the Menam River, which waters a goodly portion of the land, abound with fish. On account of the natural irrigation, even the cultivation of rice is not as tedious as it is elsewhere. There is amazingly little necessity for manual labor, a circumstance fully appreciated by the Siamese, who conduct their lives accordingly. The average man lives in almost elemental simplicity. His garments come by the yard and are washed on him. He sleeps on straw matting, bathes in the canals and eats off large leaves instead of dishes. Food, aside from the rice which is prepared without much bother, is purchased from street and canal vendors who cook it on stoves they carry with them. His children are educated by the state or in Buddhist schools. With the few *ticals* he acquires by doing odd jobs or working at the hand-crafts he attends movies, gambles and contributes to the up-keep of the Buddhist institutions which contribute much to the picturesque quality of his life. Naturally, some more serious labor must go on. In ancient days it was forced. More recently the Siamese made the happy discovery that by importing Chinese, Japanese, Javanese and Kling coolies they could themselves be free to lead the carefree lives they so dearly love. The King has now called a halt to



this free importation of labor, lest the Japanese or Chinese engulf the native population. His immigration restrictions considerably annoy the white residents of Bangkok who maintain that charm is not sufficient in domestic servants and dislike employing native help.

In justice to the Siamese it must be admitted that the climate is conducive to languor. Four months of the year are fiendishly hot, one hundred and twenty degrees being typical of a Bangkok afternoon. Four months more are rainy and the remaining period of the monsoon is cool only by relative measurement. Despite the enervating effect of the climate the Siamese display none of the signs of deterioration common in India. Their lethargy is confined to menial tasks. In the arts and sciences they progress very rapidly. Bangkok is a case in point. Besides the pageantry of gilded be-jewelled *watts*, or temples, and palaces, besides the little stilt houses that rise and fall with the rhythmic tides, it boasts macadam roads, efficient rice mills, splendid hospitals and colleges for both men and women. Many of the palaces are of Renaissance and baroque inspiration. They were erected after 1893, in which year French gunboats razed Bangkok to the ground. In the Grand Salon of the palace hang elaborate crystal chandeliers made in Europe for the Emperor Franz Joseph. The princes of Bangkok, of whom there are multitudes, are Oxford or, more commonly these days, Harvard men. Their predilections, aside from a taste for court intrigue, embrace golf, including the tiny-tee variety, boxing, science and Western art and literature. The people, although thoroughly Oriental, support American movies with as much consistency and more enthusiasm than we display. In short, although the coun-

try resembles a picture from the travels of Messer Marco Polo and gives one the sensation of moving in the older East before decay set in, modernization has progressed much beyond the stage it has reached in either China or India. Nor does the process seem to involve the obvious paradoxes or current voraciousness of the Japanese variety.

That the Siamese were not always as secure and hence not as pacifist as they now are is attested by the records of neighboring countries with whom they waged long and complicated wars in both ancient and modern times. Long after the Sixth Century, when Siam emerged as the united Kingdom of the Thais, these wars continued. Theory credits the Siamese with some responsibility for the disappearance of the sinister and mysterious Khmers of Kam-bodia. The Siamese were once subjects of the Khmers, but it was they who inflicted a crushing defeat upon Angkor, the capital of the Khmerish empire, sacking it with an efficiency unequaled in the history of butchery. The Chakkri kings, coming into power in 1782, brought comparative peace with them. The martial tendencies of the Siamese waned. Possibly the Mongol strain of blood had become weaker in them.

### III

The people are today a delightful combination of Mongol and Polynesian strains, with the latter predominating. There is none of the inscrutable stiffness of the Japanese and Chinese about them. The women are small, supple and roguishly beautiful in youth. The men are thought by some observers not to be so attractive, but they seemed so to us. The younger princes of Bangkok are small, svelte and polished. They have lustrous half-almond eyes, olive

skin and a manner pronouncedly shy. If questioned, they proved ready enough to give information, but they were very timid about making voluntary observations.

When we spoke to them, as we did at once, about polygamy, they smiled. Yes, it was permitted, but was not as commonly practised as of old. To begin with—a twinkle was usually apparent at this point—the women of Siam have always been known in the East for their independence. Feminine seclusion was never known among the people, where wives do much of the work and all of the dictating in families. Marriage is a matter of free choice and divorced women retain their dowries and half of their children. On the economic side, polygamy is expensive. We could understand that readily. At the levee at which I was presented a foreign diplomat pointed to a distinguished-looking old gentleman with a Prussian hair-cut.

"See that old man," he said. "Well, he is a royal prince and has 189 children now alive."

The prince in question, however, belonged to the old order which passed with Chulalongkorn, grandfather of the present King. Chulalongkorn, although a devotee of modernism, possessed a feminine entourage numbering 7,000, including wives, concubines and dancing girls. Harems have served the Chakri dynasty well, for they, like kings elsewhere, have used marriage as an advantageous way of acquiring and consolidating power. By marrying one's female relatives into the harems of every influential prince one sets up an espionage system that tends to defeat the machinations of rivals.

Chulalongkorn was in other respects quite in step with his times. He abolished the gold sedan chair of his pred-

ecessor Mongkut, raised his retainers from their knees in audience and promulgated the slogan "Every man, woman and child must be literate." He also translated all of Shakespeare into Siamese. Rama IV, who followed Chulalongkorn and immediately preceded Prajadipok, went a step further. After living for eleven years as a bachelor king, he renounced the harem and married a princess with the legendary Hindu name of Lakshmi. By neither marrying again nor taking a concubine he strove to discourage polygamy by example. Court gossip has it that Prajadipok intends to follow his example even to the extent of sacrificing succession in the direct line. Polygamy as a result is unfashionable. Its abandonment was a decided relief to many princes. The expenses incidental to keeping a harem are stupendous, as the following incident will illustrate.

In Buddhist Siam cremation is one of the high lights of religious practice. Cremations must be conducted in accordance with one's station in life. In the case of princes this means the erection of tremendous pagoda-like structures to be burned with the body, epicurean feasts to be served to guests and populace and fabulous entertainments involving the participation of dozens of the doll-like, gold-laden dancing girls to perform the ritualistic pantomimes from the *Ramayana*. The bill may vary from two hundred thousand to half a million dollars. Now, with the large families resulting from polygamous marriage, even a princely income is soon depleted. One of the wily older princes saved his dead in a family vault until there were four bodies, whereupon he had them all cremated in wholesale fashion at one ceremony.

That the Siamese people are sincerely



royalist there can be no doubt. Their reasons are both religious and practical. Siam is the only country where Buddhism is the state religion. Its practice in its happiest form has resulted not only in the erection of magnificent *watts* or temples and in the development of exquisite craftsmanship for their adornment, but also in an educated populace. Every youth must serve some time as a Buddhist monk. While he is in the monastery he rubs elbows with his fellow countrymen of all classes, begs daily for his food, learns the tenets of his religion and in recent times the fundamentals of world history and culture. His training over, he may stay and assist in the work of general education, or he may depart. The majority, of course, depart. Mongkut, the first significant king of the present dynasty, spent rather more time than he desired in the monastery by reason of the connivance of his father's wife, who did not wish him to succeed to the throne. He employed his time in correspondence with European Jesuits, from whom he learned Latin and thus became an admirer of Occidental culture. Upon his accession to the throne he set about inculcating it into the schedule of the monasteries, established free public schools and imported Western advisers to assist him in these projects. The king who followed him carried the work into trade and industry. Rama introduced the teaching of science into the monasteries. Prajadipok has carried on this work. He has had constructed in Bangkok a magnificent new temple which contains one of the finest collections of bronze Buddhas in existence. This dynastic connection with religious training has tended to ally the monarchs with Buddhism in the popular mind. Indeed, the line claims descent from

Buddha himself. Prajadipok is a practising Buddhist. He does not, for instance, eat the meat that is served at the royal dinner table.

Practically, the people are devoted to the dynasty because the history of progress in Siam to date is the history of the Chakkri dynasty. Everything in the way of public works that the country boasts today has either been the direct contribution of the kings or of nobles prodded to enthusiasm by them. Even the renowned Snake Farm in Bangkok is an aristocratic contribution. During the last generation the daughter of a prince while walking in her garden was fatally bitten by a cobra. Her father was so touched that he devoted the major part of his fortune to an institute to carry on research work in an attempt to discover a serum for snake-bite. It was discovered and proved most effective. Today the institution is self-supporting, supplying the entire southern Orient with many serums in addition to the snake serum. There one may see, among other sights, attendants handling deadly masses of cobras with their naked hands. Incidentally there is a very pretty statue of the unlucky princess in the entrance hall.

#### IV

Important as is domestic security for the Siamese, however, there is a more burningly dangerous field of Siamese governmental endeavor. It has always been in the hands of the King. Of course I refer to foreign policy. Siam's vulnerable position between the encroaching boundaries of two great empires, the British and the French, makes her very existence precarious. Only consummate diplomacy has rendered survival as an autonomous state possible. The Kings have shown themselves to be extremely

astute in knowing exactly when to employ expert foreign advice, how to keep foreign enterprise well under control and at what point to dispense with it. Foreign capital was first interested, concessions were made, the country was developed and then, by a series of clever treaties, extra-territorial rights were gradually revoked in return for pieces of territory until in 1927 Siam declared herself on a par with every other independent country of the world as far as legal status was concerned, a situation not at all common in her particular portion of the Orient. Siam would have no chance whatever of defying either of her mighty neighbors. She has had rare success, however, in playing them off against one another. In very recent times Japan has entered the arena and is being similarly handled. Whenever outside contacts were indispensable, Siam preferred generally to seek them in the country least apt to be dangerously motivated. Because of remoteness, and the fact that the United States claims no territory in the vicinity, the government invited our coöperation and received it. An American planned the school system. An American founded the banking system and another laid out and constructed most of the railways. It is a significant fact that of the twelve hundred miles of railway only sixty-six miles are in private hands, the remainder being owned by the government. Most industrial and commercial enterprises are now under native Siamese control. This was brought about by the gradual tapering off of the King's encouragement to foreign capital. There is apparent in Bangkok diplomatic circles a decided notion that Siam will not accept dictation of any kind from any Occidental country. The King, being not a whit less astute than

statesmen in Europe who are now conducting the governments of countries guaranteed freedom by the Versailles Treaty, is well aware that the guarantees given to Siam at that time are no proof against aggression. Siam lies well within the self-appointed sphere of the nation least likely to regard any treaties whatsoever—Japan.

That Japan supports *agents provocateurs* in Siam is difficult to verify. There are persistent rumors current to that effect. Also, there is discussion of a Japanese-built canal in the Kra Peninsula, constructed with Siamese consent, upon Siamese soil, in order to open parts of China and Siam to the lucrative South Asian trade now in the hands of the French and the English. Siam would reap rich rewards. Indeed, an extremely quiet friendship between the Siamese Government and the Japanese would have decided advantages for both parties. The Siamese nobility, otherwise hungry for power, are none too eager to take over the problem of fencing with Japanese policy; consequently they are panic-stricken at the King's glib offer of abdication, which brings us to the present situation.

The revolutions prevalent in Siam during the past year or two bear very little relation to current revolutions elsewhere. They are of the palace variety, arising out of a struggle for power between the King and the nobles. The latter feel that their ancient rights have been curtailed in order to give the people unprecedented freedom. The King feels that the aristocratic cliques are not competent to handle the foreign policy, nor so constituted that they have the good of the people at heart. The nobles forced the King's hand in the coup of 1932. He, however, overwhelmed them by drafting a liberal constitution that



far exceeded their direst fears. Complete adult franchise, and an assembly, half of which is elected by the people of the provinces, were not exactly what the aristocrats desired. Being opportunists, however, they soon managed by dint of superior experience to control the elected portion of the legislature. The upper section had become aristocratic almost as soon as the constitution was promulgated. The nobles' apparent espousal of the cause of freedom in the dispute over the criminal law is more apparent than real.

The fact that execution can not proceed without the consent of the King operates in an Oriental country, where there is always a tendency to dispose of private and political enemies nonchalantly, to the advantage of those sentenced to death, provided, of course, that the King is just, dispassionate and not given to arbitrary execution of his personal enemies. Prajadipok may have executed various of his personal enemies to the enagement of the nobles who were conspiring with them, but it is doubtful if he has ever exercised his prerogative to the detriment of any other class than the nobility. It is felt that the nobles might be a bit more free if execution were not subject to check. The fact that the people feel safer with the King in control is shown by the care exercised by the Government to conceal the present situation from them. Panic overtakes the conspirators whenever abdication is mentioned. They consider a puppet king essential to their own continued existence as a class and to Siam's survival in a disturbed Orient. The people apparently desire a king in fact, preferring to trust his avowed intention to lead them along the road to self-government than any princely promises. In any case, if they are to have a king

at all, it will be a king in fact, since Prajadipok has bluntly refused to return upon any other terms. He will probably win in his present duel with the Government.

Prajadipok makes a very profound impression upon those who come in personal contact with him. One gathers from the attitude that is general among the foreign representatives in Bangkok that he inspires respect of a genuine sort. His conduct and dignity are certainly such as to dispel all preconceived notions of a toy king in a story book kingdom. He has nothing in common with the comic-opera Balkan monarchs whom we take so lightly. Yet neither he nor the Queen, obviously, is a figure of imposing majesty. Upon the occasion of our presentation the Queen wore few jewels and the gold braid upon the King's white uniform was much less dazzling than that of several European attachés. His Majesty appeared infinitely fragile, very delicate; yet his manner, his lack of theatrical attributes, made one feel that here was a man upon whom the responsibilities of government do not rest lightly.

It is reasonable to suppose that Siam's security would be prejudiced by abdication. Into whose hands she would fall is not predictable at the moment. If the King returns to his country, he may some day find it expedient to come to terms with Japan, in which case the Japanese will find themselves fencing with a man of very different mettle from the Manchurian Emperor. Japan, however, may not move southward during Prajadipok's lifetime. As his successor has not been selected, thereby giving the nobles further field for intrigue, the fate of the "happiest land in Asia" is now open to the wildest speculation.

# THE LITERARY LANDSCAPE



**A** BACKWARD glance at publishers' lists of the autumn season that is drawing to a close as this is being written reveals a number of American novels of importance, including several by young writers whose first books give very definite promise for the future.

In the latter category are such books as Josephine Johnson's *Now in November* (Simon and Schuster, \$2.50), a novel of the depression significant both for its beauty of style and its content; Archie Binns's *Lightship* (Reynal and Hitchcock, \$2.50), unusual in its technique and subject matter; Louis Dodge's *The American* (Messner, \$2.50), a long and solid book about the days of the pioneers; and Victoria Lincoln's *February Hill* (Farrar and Rinehart, \$2.50), the story of a New England shanty family that has an abundance of both humor and sentiment.

Of novels by established authors that stand out, there are Grace Zaring Stone's *The Cold Journey* (Morrow, \$2.50), a philosophical consideration of the Deerfield Massacre, and the fate of its survivors; Isabel Paterson's *The Golden Vanity* (Morrow, \$2.50), four women against the background of New York during the Lean Years, delight-

by

HERSCHEL BRICKELL



fully and entertainingly done; Mary Ellen Chase's *Mary Peters* (Macmillan, \$2.50), the story of a Maine seacoast family that is also a valuable record of a passing America—passed, perhaps, except that it lives on in the people whose lives it shaped; and Kenneth Roberts's *Captain Caution*

(Doubleday, Doran), which, while not up to the best of Mr. Roberts's stirring series of historical novels, is a very readable story of the War of 1812.

Also to be recommended are Robert P. Tristram Coffin's lovely and charming autobiographical fragment, *Lost Paradise* (Macmillan, \$2.50), in which a distinguished poet recalls his Maine boyhood on an amphibious farm and dips into the past Miss Chase has recreated so well in her best-selling novel; Josephine Herbst's *The Executioner Waits* (Harcourt, Brace), a history of our own times in a long and rich story of the adventures of a Middle Western family; and Helen Hull's *Morning Tells the Day* (Coward-McCann, \$2.50), in which Miss Hull traces the lives and fortunes of a Middle Western high school class through our times.

## Another New Star

Irving Stones's *Lust for Life* (Longmans, Green, \$2.50), which, like some



of the other books already mentioned, has found its way into the reading lists of thousands of Americans, is one of the distinguished novels of the year, which, if it does not belong strictly to us because its subject matter is the life of Van Gogh, is the work of a young author in whom a great deal of pride may be taken.

Straight through 1934, the domestic production in the field of fiction has been superior to the imported books, and this, in a day of intense nationalism, may warrant in us some fancy chest-throwing; we are certainly very nearly culturally self-sustaining in fiction, at least, although the internationally minded Landscaper would be the last to wish us cut off from the thought and the art of the rest of the world.

Of the recent books that have come to us from other countries, a brief list would include Margaret Irwin's excellent historical novel, *The Proud Servant* (Harcourt, Brace, \$2.50), which deals with the stormy life of Montrose, and which will be enjoyed all the more for a familiarity with John Buchan's fine biography of the Scottish leader. Miss Irwin, like Mrs. Stone in *The Cold Journey*, is not wholly interested in facts; she works in the penetrating light of an intelligent woman's mind, and the flavor of her book is one of its most admirable qualities. She is a scholar and careful of her research, but she does a great deal more than merely to retell a good story. The Landscaper found as much pleasure in this novel as in any he has read for months; it strengthens Miss Irwin's standing as one of the best living historical novelists.

### *Other Good Imports*

Other foreign novels deserving of consideration include Felix Salten's

*Florian: The Emperor's Stallion* (Bobbs-Merrill, \$2.50), a delightful, if melancholy, book whose background is the pre-War Austrian court; and Ignazio Silone's *Fontamara* (Smith and Haas), a sharply etched study of a little Italian village and its momentary stand against the onslaught of Fascism. It might be well to say another word about James Hilton's *Lost Horizon* (Morrow, \$2.50), which was first published in 1933 and failed to arouse much interest among the customers, but which is now widely popular in a reissue; it is a very fine novel indeed, either as a stirring story of an unusual adventure, or as a thoughtful commentary upon the ways of human beings, who in this case are offered everything they want, and who flee Paradise as quickly as possible for the fevers and the frets of the world we live in. Wouldn't we all, if we had a free choice?

More recent novels of importance include Maurice Baring's *The Lonely Lady of Dulwich* (Knopf, \$1.50), a short book that is a perfect thing of its kind, the story of the life of a beautiful woman who barely missed love twice. It is written with a great and cunning simplicity, and wears an air of honest quaintness which it could have been given only by a man of such distinguished talent as its author. It is out of the ordinary run of fiction, and will not suit everybody, but those who like it at all will cherish its subtleties.

Also, Sheila Kaye-Smith winds up her Alard trilogy with *Gallybirds* (Harpers, \$2.50), and in it writes a novel that is somewhat different from her usual stories; she has immersed herself in the period of the Restoration, and especially in its religious aspects, and she handles her unusual material with a skill that is familiar to her followers.

Admirers of Marcel Proust, and perhaps others who have not yet made the acquaintance of one of the supreme geniuses of the novel in our generation, will be interested in the new four-volume edition of *Remembrance of Things Past* (Random House, \$12.50), which is handsomely printed and bound, and which contains an excellent introduction by Joseph Wood Krutch. The Landscaper says again that this tremendously long book is a great novel that will stand the test of time, and the new edition makes it seem a much simpler task to read it than when it was a whole shelf-full of volumes, and when one section of it alone cost fifteen dollars. *Cities of the Plain* had to be published in a limited edition because of the censorship, which now seems to be slumbering.

### *William Saroyan*

One of the discoveries of Whit Burnett as editor of *Story* is a young Armenian named William Saroyan, and his first collected volume, *The Daring Young Man on the Flying Trapeze* (Random House, \$2.50), has aroused more discussion than any volume of short stories of recent publication. It has some striking merits and some striking defects; Mr. Saroyan is young, cocky and original, willing to cast aside old forms and to experiment, and frequently quite successful with his experiments. How far he will go eventually is, of course, another matter. One of his gravest handicaps will be popularity and prosperity, for up to this point he has made literary material out of his hardships. This is one danger, his cleverness another. Hence the Landscaper is willing to wait before hailing Mr. Saroyan as a genius, although there is no doubt of his fresh talent.

Of books that reflect the state of the

world at large, there have been fewer of late than usual because the holiday season is drawing on, and publishers realize that we all are likely to forget reality for a moment at least during the Christmas season. There are some, however, such as William Henry Chamberlain's *Russia's Iron Age* (Little, Brown, \$3), which are far too important to be overlooked at any time of the year.

### *Hard Years in Russia*

What gives Mr. Chamberlain's book added interest and value, in addition, that is, to the fact that he has lived in Russia twelve years and that he went there favoring Communism, is that he has now left the country and does not expect to go back. He writes, therefore, with a free hand and not in the shadow of the rigid Soviet censorship. His book is primarily about the years from 1929 on, including the period of the terrible famine that cost the lives of thousands, and which he says was used by the Soviet Government to further its attempts at collectivization.

Mr. Chamberlain does not believe that the gains in Russia, which he recognizes, are worth the sacrifices; in other words, he is now convinced that democracy, with all its faults, is better than dictatorship, even when dictatorship is supposed to be working for the good of the masses. His is the sort of book that sets the orthodox Marxists in a frenzy, but fair-minded people will recognize that he is telling the truth as he sees it, and that if he paints the U.S.S.R. as somewhat less than Utopia, it is because he knows what he is talking about.

There is nothing in his book more suggestive than a chapter in which he makes a comparison between Peter the Great and Stalin in their attempts to Europeanize Oriental Russia, or at least



to give the country the material blessings that have been worked out in democratic states. He thinks there is danger that Russia will imitate many of our worst features, and the Landscaper has wondered more than once why there was so much talk of Moscow's having achieved a subway as a particular triumph.

Would a country starting from scratch with a chance to plan intelligently, deliberately put its citizens into subways and ask them to rejoice at the privilege?

### *Praise for Communism*

Another book that bears upon the general question of government in our times is Maurice Parmelee's *Bolshevism, Fascism and the Liberal-Democratic-State* (Wiley, \$2), a long and detailed study of the operations of these three types of contemporary polity. Mr. Parmelee tries to be fair to all, but his plain leaning is toward Communism, and he believes that a Workers' International is the only way to world peace. Also, he thinks such an International is extremely improbable any time soon, and ends his book, therefore, on a pessimistic note. His chapters on Fascism are especially interesting because they contain much of the truth about Mussolini's Administration that is ordinarily suppressed or ignored; behind the bold, showy and wonderfully well publicized Italian front, the economic situation is not a very encouraging one. Mr. Parmelee has to be read with care because he is given to sweeping statements and does not always think as clearly as he might, but there is much of value in his book.

Other books to interest those with a liking for public affairs include G. D. H. and Margaret Cole's *A Guide to*

*Modern Politics* (Knopf, \$3), which, aside from the Coles' well-known leaning toward Fabian Socialism, is an excellent book by two clear thinkers and writers; David Lloyd George's *War Memoirs: 1916-1917* (Little, Brown, \$4), full of controversial dynamite; and Sir Herbert Richmond's *Sea Power in the Modern World* (Reynal and Hitchcock, \$2.50), a careful consideration of navies in their relation to national security, by a British expert.

Of books about our own affairs, an additional explanation of the New Deal by one of its most enthusiastic champions is *The New Democracy* by Harold L. Ickes (Norton, \$1.50), which is well done, but by no means so important as Henry A. Wallace's *New Frontiers*; and *The Roosevelt Omnibus*, edited by Don Wharton (Knopf, \$3.50), a book that tells everything anybody could wish to know about F. D. R. and family, and furnishes dozens of carefully selected photographs as well. It is a good job, although quite likely to give some people apoplexy in view of the last election.

### *War for Petroleum*

To be added to the section not far away, Affairs in General, are H. C. Engelbrecht's *One Hell of a Business!* (McBride, \$1.50), a small book containing some more facts about the international arms racket, sad facts, because nobody seems to know what is to be done about them; and F. C. Hanighens's *The Secret War* (John Day, \$2.75), the story of the world-wide fight for oil, the life-blood of our mechanical world. Mr. Hanighen's book is chock-a-block with alarming statements, including the suggestion of a possibility of a fairly early war between this country and Great Britain over petroleum. It is a

very upsetting book, and would be much more so if Mr. Hanighen had documented it better. His sources are European journalists, and European journalists are a good deal less trustworthy than ours. The subject is, however, of first importance, and there will probably be more and better books on it.

### *H. G. Wells and Life*

This brings us by gentle stages to the miscellaneous classification, and the outstanding book is not hard to pick, even though the Landscaper found a good part of it tiresome reading because it seemed nonsensical. It is H. G. Wells's *Experiment in Autobiography* (Macmillan, \$4), a long, rich and frank story of a man who has risen to world renown from the humblest beginnings. Mr. Wells, finding himself at sixty-seven burdened with too many of the details of living to think as clearly as he wished, sat down to write about himself in order to clarify his thoughts and give himself a fresh start.

The result is a book that is of the greatest interest so long as Mr. Wells is writing about Mr. Wells, about his marriages, his career as a novelist, the people he has known, his successful attempts at popularizing scientific knowledge, and so on. But when the world-state, economic planning and all, enters—it will bring encouragement to the credulous to know that Mr. Wells does not think we are far away from this happy condition of affairs—it is very hard not to think that there is entirely too much detachment from reality to give this part of the book any value at all. To be sure, the Landscaper is a professional pessimist, which has to be taken into account, but Mr. Wells is a professional Arranger-of-Things-to-Suit-

His-Fancy, and this also has to be taken into account.

Another writer's story of his life, which is a good deal more intimate and subjective than Mr. Wells's *Experiment*, is John Cowper Powys's *Autobiography* (Simon and Schuster, \$3.50), which would be a good deal more readable, to the Landscaper's way of thinking, if Mr. Powys were not so prolix; words gush from him in streams, and a good many of the words seem less important to one of his readers than they do to him. Mr. Powys thinks of himself as a "possessed" person, which is his own modest way of considering himself at least partly a genius, if not full-fledged.

How much interest there will be in the frankness of some of his revelations about himself it is hard to determine; a larger question still is whether something ought to be done about the present craze of novelists for writing about themselves without bothering to put on their fictional masks. This is a phase of the ingrowing tendency of modern fiction which is also to be found in the presence of so many novelists as characters in our novels; on the whole the Landscaper prefers a more objective approach to art. Not, of course, that anybody, least of all the novelists, gives a hoot what the Landscaper prefers. . . .

### *Two Literary Figures*

Of the current crop of biographies, there are two outstanding studies of literary figures, Avrahm Yarmolinsky's *Dostoevsky* (Harcourt, Brace, \$3.75), and Antonina Valentin's *Poet in Exile: A Life of Heinrich Heine* (Viking, \$3). Mr. Yarmolinsky has long been known as an authority on his subject, and years of study and thought have gone into his fine, comprehensive



and sympathetic biography, which is also a good critical study. Miss Valentin's life of Stresemann remains one of the most brilliant portraits the Landscaper can recall out of the thousands he has read or examined, and any reader who is under the impression that there is nothing new to be said about Heine will find himself mistaken when he opens the pages of this new volume. It is the work of a distinguished and original mind, and very much worth while.

George Fort Milton's *The Eve of Conflict: Stephen A. Douglas and The Needless War* (Houghton Mifflin, \$5) is a combination of biography and history in which a distinguished Southerner has tried to prove that the Civil War need never have been fought, or if ever, at least that it might easily have been postponed. This is a long, thoroughly documented book which takes time to read, but there is no dullness in the writing, and the thesis is very well sustained.

Another American biography of especial interest is Frederic Van de Water's *Glory Hunter: A Life of General Custer* (Bobbs-Merrill, \$3.75), in which the commander of the American troops in the famous Battle of Big Horn is shown to be somewhat less than a hero. Mr. Van de Water has made a careful investigation of Custer's record, which includes the shooting of Southern prisoners in the Civil War, and the point of his book is that the famous Last Stand was a good break for a man who really did little to deserve the reputation he has. In other words, a debunking biography, but one that is the result of careful investigation rather than of any malicious desire to strip the laurels from another brow and replace them with poison ivy.

### *A Wild Western Hero*

Another hero of the West who comes off a good deal better than Custer is *Broncho Charlie*, whose portrait has been executed by Gladys Shaw Erskine in a book the subtitle of which is *A Saga of the Saddle* (Crowell, \$3). Broncho Charlie was the last of the Pony Express riders, and was once with Buffalo Bill's circus. He served through the World War in a British outfit by dropping almost a quarter of a century from his age in talking matters over with the recruiting sergeant. Also, at the age of eighty-two he rode horseback from coast to coast and enjoyed it; in other words, he's a real frontiersman of the old school, and a wholly likable person as Miss Erskine presents him to her readers. She is familiar with the background at first hand, and her book is illustrated with many excellent old prints besides the photographs. It's good American stuff.

If one book had to be chosen out of this batch, it would be H. G. Wells's *Experiment in Autobiography*, which takes rank easily among the most important publications of the current year; the Landscaper's prejudices against novelists' autobiographies vanish very quickly in the presence of a man of Wells's calibre who sits down a short way this side of seventy to examine the life he has lived.

### *Cuba's Sad History*

Whether you have any special curiosity about our neighboring island of Cuba or not, Hudson Strode's *The Pageant of Cuba* (Smith and Hass, \$3), ought to be interesting and even exciting reading, because it is a very well done story of that unhappy island from the time Columbus burst in on an In-

dian Utopia almost down to the present Mendieta régime. It is a pageant in which beauty and bestial cruelty are twins; Cuba is a terrestrial Paradise which man has done everything he could think of to turn into Hell. And in this respect, at least, the human race has never been accused of any lack of ingenuity. . . .

Mr. Strode writes exceptionally well; his book has both style and form. His chapters on that miserable war we fought with Spain are admirable; the Landscaper hopes very much they will stimulate at least a few people to look up Walter Millis's *The Martial Spirit*, which contains the whole story of the conflict that was once known as Mr. Hearst's and Mr. Pulitzer's War.

All the way through, Mr. Strode tries to keep the scales balanced, and his accounts of the recent trouble in the island seem to one who knows very little about the subject to be eminently fair. Machado is made out the beast he undoubtedly was, although there is little enough doubt that American bankers and industrialists helped to give the Cubans the pleasure of his notorious régime. Mr. Strode does not neglect, however, such creditable contributions as General Wood's administration; we have not proved a wholly false friend to our neighbor for whose freedom so many American soldiers died of typhoid and Alger's rotten beef. . . .

### *New Hope for the Jews*

It is a long jump to a part of the world where the Soviets are having a go at a solution of the Jewish problem in the establishment of the autonomous colony of Biro-Bidjan, which promises in time to rival or surpass Palestine as a place of refuge, and which, if the

U.S.S.R. holds to its fair promises, will be an accomplishment of first importance. The story is told in full in *Where the Ghetto Ends*, by Leon Deneen (King, \$2.50), a young Jew of American birth who has made a first-hand study of the situation and who feels very much encouraged by the prospects. One of the dangers is that the area might be involved in a war between the Soviets and Japan, but authorities, including William Henry Chamberlain, whose latest book was referred to earlier in this article, are doubtful that this will be an early conflict, as Russia is genuinely anxious for peace in order to push on with her tremendous programme of industrialization.

Those of us who not only live in New York, but who love it, and this includes the Landscaper, have an especial interest in two of the new books, but they both ought to make an appeal outside the city as well. After all, New York is one of the most astonishing manifestations of our age, interesting at least as a cultural phenomenon; even those who don't like the city would have to admit that. Number One on this list is a book of photographs with titles called *Metropolis* (Harpers, \$3.50), which is the work of Agnes Rogers and Fred Allen, already well known as collaborators on similar tasks. Mr. Allen's comment and the excellent selection of photographs make up a well-nigh perfect picture of what life in New York at the present time is like, what people eat and where they eat it, how much they earn, what they pay for rent, where they buy their clothes, and so on. The Landscaper's delight in this fine book is tinged with regret that there are not available similar studies of all the great cities in which masses of men have gathered since civilization began. Perhaps there will be of



existing metropolises; the suggestion is too good to be overlooked.

Henry Collins Brown's editing of *Valentine's Manual* several years ago laid lovers of New York greatly in his debt, and he is back again at his task of collecting and preserving the every-day history of the city he knows so well. His *Story of Old New York* (Dutton, \$5), with many illustrations, brings the tale down from the very beginning to 1835, the year of the Big Fire, and it is simply filled with the quaint and the curious things that do not get into the history books, and which are far more interesting—and significant—than the things that do.

### *Don Marquis and Religion*

Don Marquis is somebody else who has written much and well about New York, and in his most recent book he calls in Jesus, God and Satan as characters in a series of stories called *Chapters for the Orthodox* (Doubleday, Doran, \$2.50), in which he girds at some of the inconsistencies in the general practice of Christianity. Some people will be shocked by Mr. Marquis's familiarity with the residents of Heaven and Hell, but to those who understand, his deeply and genuinely religious spirit shows itself in every line of his irony and humor. He doesn't approve of such things as infant damnation, but that ought not to trouble many people; as a matter of fact Hell in general hardly seems a live issue any longer. But there

will always be room for the kind of satire Mr. Marquis writes, and the new book offers both pleasure and profit.

### *England and the Universe*

Hilaire Belloc has rewritten the English story from his own angle, that of the Anglo-Catholic, in *A Shorter History of England* (Macmillan, \$3), which shifts the usual emphasis almost entirely, and lays great stress upon the importance of the Roman background. Mr. Belloc invariably writes well, and, regardless of how willing one is to accept his theories, is just as invariably interesting. The bits of the present book the Landscaper has read whetted his appetite for more.

Sir James Jeans has produced one of his simplest and most easily comprehended books in *Through Space and Time* (Macmillan, \$3), in which he tells about life on earth millions of years ago and life on other stars and planets millions of miles away from us. Sir James is a good mind-stretcher even when he goes metaphysical, and there are a lot of illustrations in the new book to help its readers toward a complete understanding.

The publishers announce that 300,000 copies of this author's books have been sold in this country and England, which is good evidence of a wide-spread interest in the universe, although what this means exactly to the earthly problems of the human race the Landscaper has not yet puzzled out.



*Tros Tyriusque mihi nullo discrimine agetur*

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## Apéritif

### *Presidential Vanishing*

CERTAIN critics have been startled by a movie called *The President Vanishes*, which by the time this is published must be familiar to most Americans. What is surprising in the film is its assumption that wars are arranged by big and piratical industrialists, or at least that the United States can be manipulated into an already existing war by these gentry. In the film a small group of men—a steel magnate, an oil king, an unscrupulous politician, an international banker, an owner of a chain of sensational newspapers and a Washington lobbyist—undertake to draw the United States into a new European war for the sake of the profit in it. It is true that the film's impressionistic account of the propaganda used to persuade 120,000,000 Americans to this course does not include the movies themselves, yet its implication—that wealthy Americans might make such use, successfully, of any other means of propaganda, and without a patriotic motive—is distinctly a new departure. That it could have up-setting and even subversive effects on the mass mind was indicated by the odd quiet with which audiences watched

the picture: there was enough excitement and patriotic fervor in other phases to draw more noise from the spectators if they were not impressed by the idea.

But there is another idea in the film which also deserves attention. Although the little group of wilful men succeed in persuading all of Congress and the majority of American citizens that the country's honor must be saved by entrance into the war, the President stands out against them, and just when his cause seems hopeless finally wins the day for peace by having himself kidnapped. By disappearing he gains overwhelming sympathy for himself; and by being "found" in the headquarters of a Fascist army which has nearly succeeded in taking control of the country he destroys all of that army's prestige and returns the majority of the people to peaceful aims.

Thus is taught the great lesson that a problem, insoluble by wise and courageous facing, may be solved by running away from it. While the President stood his ground and fought the war-makers with mere reason, they prevailed. But when he deserted the scene to make a national sensation, irrelevant



to the main issue, they were confounded.

Obviously there can be other applications of the idea. If the veterans' organizations threaten to become successful in their most unreasonable demands, President Roosevelt might hide away in Hyde Park, announcing that he was kidnapped. Similarly, if conservatives gain too much ground in their fight for a balanced budget, or if the silver Senators find even more support for their bimetallistic schemes, or if the utilities convince a majority of citizens that they really are being robbed by the Government—a neat disappearance might turn the trick.

Of course, the tactic of facing away from a problem is not at all new to the present Administration. There have been many twists and turns of countenance since March 4, 1933, and President Roosevelt is a past master of shifting attention from knotty problems. Although he has so far not encountered anything difficult enough to require his imitating the Cheshire Cat of *Alice in Wonderland*, we may believe that he would not hesitate to do so if the situation demanded it. And it is not hard to imagine what alarm would be felt as that ubiquitous smile vanished from the political air.

In the case of such issues as the bonus and silver legislation, however, it is a question how successful the ruse would be. If Mr. Roosevelt actually took himself from the Washington scene for a few days, some of these patriots would be likely to strip it of everything but the Unknown Soldier's tomb. On the whole it seems advisable not to encourage the President to rely too confidently on the effectiveness of running away from his problems. There is still something to be said for facing them.

## *Cracking Down in Suburbia*

Authoritarianism has bloomed in Bronxville! Residents of the Westchester County suburb have felt the iron heel of a dictatorial Federal Government! Forty families are being gouged of their hard-earned income by postal officials! Although the fine Etruscan hand of Mr. Farley has not yet been discerned in the imbroglio, that will doubtless come before the issue is settled.

What happened is this: The forty families really live in Mount Vernon, though they are several miles from its post office and only a short distance from the Bronxville one. Telephone exchanges take cognizance of the fact that the families, for practical purposes, live in Bronxville, and regulate their rates accordingly. But the Mount Vernon government knows that they are Mount Vernon taxpayers and sends them tax bills with assurance that they will not refuse to pay—on this ground at least. This is what caused the clash with the Federal Government. The Mount Vernon controller early in January mailed bills to the forty taxpayers, placing on each envelope a two-cent stamp in the reasonable belief that all citizens of so small a locality enjoyed the same postal rate. But the Bronxville postmaster returned the letters with a demand for forty cents' extra postage, since three cents is the proper rate between two such localities.

So the matter stands at the moment of writing. The Mount Vernon controller is aware "that an important principle is at issue," and takes his time to arrive at a decision. But what can he do against the majestic power of our Federal Government, inflated by Mr. Roosevelt and his colleagues? Its will

must prevail; that is the principle of authoritarianism. And there is the further disturbing thought for the Mount Vernon controller that the high authority in this particular instance is one Postmaster General Farley, who has it in mind to become Governor of the State of New York in 1936. If the controller does not play his cards delicately, he may not enjoy being controller after that date.



### *Non-Partisan News*

Mr. William Randolph Hearst made a speech over the radio on January 5, giving the American people "the plain, uncensored truth" about Russian Communism. Apparently he had a double motive: to check the spread of Communism in this country and to dissuade Americans from doing business with the Soviets—at least in

the form of sending them our surplus grains.

There is, of course, nothing unusual in a Hearst denunciation of Communism. But it was amusing to hear him say: "My friends, in this discourse I am not quoting in any place or in any particular form my own publications, lest you might think that their facts were influenced by my opinion." The trend of modern journalism is toward a policy of keeping editorializing out of the news pages, but there is such a thing as selection of stories to print and to emphasize. It would be difficult to persuade many intelligent readers that the Hearst papers did not enjoy editorial attention of this kind—even if Mr. Hearst had not had his radio speech reproduced in large type on the front page of his journals, where important news is supposed to have first place.

W. A. D.





# Could This Really Be an “Age of Plenty”?

BY J. GEORGE FREDERICK

*Have we either the human or the industrial capacity to make it so, and would we like it if we had?*

QUITE evidently the Left and Right are meeting on a critical battleground when they take up the question of our ability to produce “plenty.”

The reason newspaper and magazine columns resound with discussion on “overproduction,” “idle plant capacity,” etc., is that the Leftists critically need to establish the point that America could at once produce very great quantities for everybody. If they can not establish this point, half a dozen Leftist doctrines fall with a crash. The mooted “age of plenty” would be spilling through a sieve.

This is why we have had the almost savage comment from the Left on *America's Capacity to Produce* by the Brookings Institute, and statistician Robert Doane's findings along the same line. Only the less radical *New Republic* has admitted as substantially correct Doane's figures (showing no very great capacity to produce beyond 1929)—but takes the more equivocal position that American industry could quickly be made to produce a great plenty. However, no one has ever seriously denied

that there is great “potential plenty” in America; and the whole question threatens to go into a bunker when it is made to hinge on a matter of how much time it would take to bring American capacity to produce up to the high level necessary for universal “plenty.” Would it take two years or twenty? And if twenty, would it not happen (as it has in the past twenty years) that our standards would move up again to elude the *ignis fatuus* of “plenty”?

Those who know intimately the status of American industry have no hesitation whatever in saying that it would be quite impossible to reach within two years the production point necessary for universal “plenty” (even if this conception of “plenty” is held down to the \$2,100 a year standard for every family which has been widely accepted as a “decent American standard of living”). Equally emphatic is the decision of such realists about American industry, to the effect that there was no tremendous “overproduction” in 1929. To cap the climax, there is a great deal of agreement (among Leftists and Rightists) on the point that the \$2,100

a year "decent" standard is actually low. No very pronounced American paradise can be built on \$2,100 per year per family, and this the capitalist knows as definitely as the collectivist.

## II

Thus it comes to pass that, paradoxically, just at the time that Utopian societies on the Pacific Coast are flourishing like the green bay tree, the main supports under Eastern economic Utopias are falling down. "Plenty" for everybody, alas, is *not* just around the corner.

Perhaps this climax becomes a double climax when further research discloses that a thoroughly sound but not at all extravagant health diet, if adopted by all American families, would require not only all acreage now under farm production, but 40,000,000 more acres! This is confounding to both Left and Right! Couple this with the Brookings Institution conclusion that "it would require but a moderate increase in the consumption of the millions whose standards of living even in 1929 were below the requirements of health and efficiency *to absorb the full productive capacities of the nation*," and you have virtually a silencer for the extravagant statements of Leftists who have persisted in the argument that merely some political turn-about is necessary to pour at once (within two to five years, say) into the laps of every American family a bountiful "plenty."

Even this, however, is not the full realistic story of the practical inability of America to accomplish this plenty soon. It is well certified that in 1929—with our production system well oiled, with a practised smooth organization of workers, going at a good clip (but on an average of fifty-one hours per week)

—we could have produced about twenty per cent more than we did. But what do we now face in 1935?

First of all, we have reduced hours of work from near fifty-one to about forty (with the A. F. of L. clamoring for thirty). It would take a twenty-five per cent increase of efficiency in production to bring present-day production capacity up to that of 1929, in view of the decline in hours—but there is no twenty-five per cent increase in production to be found by any realistic study of production today, and therefore we are forty per cent less able to produce than in 1929, on this one count (shortened hours of work) alone.

Second, the realistic facts are that not only has there been no general improvement in production efficiency (except some few individual industries) but there has been an actual decline, for a variety of perfectly good reasons. We might summarize them:

(1) Near-stoppage of modernized factory construction;

(2) Deterioration of idle machinery, rusting and going to ruin through lack even of the minimum of care idle machinery and plants need;

(3) Disorganization of working staffs, both managerial and skilled labor, tuned up and built up for effective service;

(4) Change in consumer requirements, desires and technical adaptation; making much of the 1929 production facilities obsolete.

There are other factors making for decline in production capacity, but these are the major ones. They have done very great damage to American production, and in consequence, there is so much to do to modernize production that the job begins to look semi-revolutionary. It is not exaggerating to



say that many plants which were fully up-to-date even as late as 1929 are now quite obsolete; rendered so not necessarily by other new factories in competition, but by general technical or æsthetic advances which have not yet been applied, but are waiting to be applied. These advances are not necessarily efficiency or cost-cutting advances, but also represent psychological changes in demand. These are often of an extent and character making an entirely new factory and technique preferable or necessary.

### III

We must stop here to puncture one of the balloons of the easy economic generalizers, the balloon of "factory capacity," a phrase which has never been and is not now anything but a "weasel word." Its very origin is Barnum-like. Factory owners once used to boast freely and harmlessly about their capacity and sometimes printed these boasts on their letterheads along with an accommodating artist's fanciful drawing of the factory; a 2,000-foot floor space factory being made to look like a 10,000-foot factory. "Factory capacity," in this Barnumized sense, was calculated on a purely theoretical or semi-imaginative basis. If the factory was being worked on one shift, the handy lead pencil made it easy to treble it, by assuming that the factory could produce three times as much on three shifts. Doubtless it could—given no accidents, no strikes, and all the requirements of such a three-shift plant (which the plant almost invariably could not boast). Either the assumption (unwarranted) was that three shifts of equally skilled labor were available, or that all the accessories and facilities of a trebled production were present (an assumption equally unwar-

ranted). A competent production engineer who has studied three-shift, twenty-four-hour production in a practical manner, knows that there are many factors necessary to its success which the average plant does not possess. At the same time the community where the plant is located rarely has the facilities for trebling the skilled labor necessary. Even when well trained engineers rate the factory capacity there is often overcalculation due to the narrow technical premises used in calculation. The famous Smith plant in Milwaukee making automobile frames with but little hand labor was widely quoted as having a 10,000-a-day capacity, but when I checked it up, it was officially admitted to be twenty-five per cent less.

The Technocrats put their heads in this dangling noose of "factory capacity" and gaily committed suicide on it. They made the term stretch out, not merely to a theoretical present capacity, but to a future one, provided every known or projected modern science was focused on it and applied, no matter how far off the projected scientific advance might be in application, or how freshly born in the laboratory. "Factory capacity," in their hands, became a Jules Verne technique, accomplished merely with pen and paper; but was argued as if when we woke up tomorrow morning it would be a realized fact.

We may now turn our attention to a second angle of the subject, equally deadly to the blithe assumptions of "plenty." There is a textile mill in New England, let us say. It stands there beside a mill dam, a huge three-story affair, a block long, run by water power, and our prophets of plenty insist that it is to be calculated in our roster for making production. Has it not 3,000 spindles, and would these not produce

so many million yards of cloth operated on three shifts? How dare we cavil at this calculation?

But what are the facts? Alas and alack! The mill is a hang-over from early days, with rather ancient machinery and facilities, and the cost per yard of cloth manufactured here is thoroughly uneconomic. Furthermore to run it to full capacity, three shifts a day would not only require more power than is available, but also more skilled labor, three or four times the present population of the town, and create housing and a lot of other serious and more or less unsolvable problems. In other words, it is absolutely uneconomic to run this mill three shifts; in fact it is already fairly evident that it is uneconomic to run it *at all*! Its real "capacity" is zero! (What good is a factory producing bread at a dollar a loaf?) There are a great number of factories like this textile mill.

#### IV

A third element in the situation is brought out by asking, bluntly, "*capacity to produce what?*" It is a very grave error in assumptions of plenty to overlook the basic element of *desire* (the older orthodox word was *demand*). We have a much more psychological view of economics today, and have sloughed off the older rigidities of thinking. If America were full of factories, all managed by idiots, and all these factories were manufacturing iron deer for lawns, candlesticks, wigs and stage coaches, etc., what relation would such production have to effective demand? None, of course. But we never attain, in our modern, swift civilization, a one hundred per cent coördination of desire and production (these are far more accurate and expressive words than

"supply and demand"). A certain proportion of factory effort is always found to be maladjusted; making goods not wanted. Therefore we must face the fact that a surprising proportion of our production *does not hit the moving target of desire*. It is nothing to cry over; even the expert marksman does not always hit the bull's-eye. Consequently it is not to be wondered at that even our most able enterprisers constantly make "misses." The less able and the incompetent make a great many misses, of course.

The net result is a considerable volume of production which is a "drug on the market." When one considers what prayerful, intense, earnest effort by enterprisers goes into hitting the bull's-eye of economic desire, it doesn't take long to surmise that a state capitalistic enterprise, operated bureaucratically, would miss the bull's-eye mournfully often; and that because of this fact an economic dictator would quickly be faced with the Joshua-like temptation of *commanding the moving target of desire to stand still*. That is to say, he would issue an edict: *regiment your desires, so that we may cut waste and have our beloved "plenty."* But plenty of what?—we would again impudently inquire. Iron deer and stage coaches? The same neckties for everybody? One model of automobile? One style of shoes? Are we not now moving along this path faster than any people on earth? The meaning and philosophy of the term plenty, in terms of desires, and in terms of efficient producing, thus becomes apparent. We may have plenty of goods in the precise degree that we will consent to throttle down and similarize our desires and uniform ourselves. If the American people would sign contracts to accept the rations of a



tsar of production, just as the army man must accept the army's rations as handed to him (but without the army man's chance to buy other goods with his pay), then it would technically be possible in two years, I believe, to provide a very goodly ration for everybody in America. The manufacture of all toothpaste, for instance, would be confined to one brand, in two factories, one in the East and one in the West. The result would be that toothpaste would be listed in the budget at one-third of its present cost. But you would have to like what was handed to you. You could storm around all you liked—you would get no other toothpaste. In the same proportion, the cost of other goods would be reduced, because the entire job of manufacture and of distribution would be cut-and-dried; so much goods delivered to every single person or family, just as automatically as the postman delivers mail.

Would this be "plenty"? Under the "plenty" of "organized production" at least nine-tenths of the differences in goods manufactured would cease; you would have "a toothpaste," "an automobile," "a radio," while in women's clothing there would certainly be a very striking reduction in differences and fashion changes. But would this be "plenty" in any eyes but those of the believers in the special cults of "plenty"? The idea of plenty which exists in the average mind is quite something else again. Mainly it consists, of course, in *plenty of the particular things you happen to like*. Not even on so common an article as coffee or tea would there be the least hope of uniform, satisfied acceptance, for there are many blends and types. A standardized "plenty," based on concentrated manufacturing efficiency, would of necessity

compel the rigid regimentation of desire. Admittedly this regimentation of America has the "capacity" for such a "plenty"—it could undoubtedly be accomplished in two years; and admittedly it would result in every family in the United States receiving "rations" of goods lifting it up to somewhere near a "comfort level," with sufficient goods for health and quite ordinary comfort, but only of a plain kind. The whole procedure, however, we must significantly repeat, would be on the same basis as a distribution of army goods; the same monotonous uniformity, the same subordination of individual whim and preference. And of course it would change the economic system in America to a kind of gigantic Red Cross organization, with citizens as ration recipients, and compelling giving and taking of definite commands to workers to labor, in a manner worked out by the masters of production on a technical efficiency basis.

## V

The striking thing to note is that such a gigantic change in our economic scheme, and a virtual cessation of American economic life as we know it, requiring at least two years of the most far-reaching reorganization, *would arrive at a net result startlingly little different from the conditions now complained of*; in fact, would be an extension of today's disabilities to every one. We would all be in a kind of vast CCC camp, accepting rations and obeying the orders of the drillmasters who ran it. Certainly the CCC is a distinct step upward toward comfort and health and well-being—even enjoyment—for those now in such concentration camps. So, likewise, would the plan of the new "plenty" be a step upward for a great

many people, and they might be as willing and eager to enter into it as the CCC people are. But could we really call it a "good life" as a permanent policy?

The truth is that a majority of clear-eyed citizens of the United States, understanding all the issues involved, and weighing the relative values, would, without the shadow of a doubt, reject the "plenty" which would be offered on the terms I have indicated as attainable in two years. We have the capacity for such a regimented "plenty" if this plenty is taken to mean goods of a minimum comfort kind manufactured under dictatorship-ruled state capitalism in absolutely simplified, standardized fashion (one article, one model of a kind and far fewer choices of colors, designs, types)—ending all private enterprise and commandeering and allocating all labor under "must" orders and all raw materials. An Inca-like civilization would thus develop, in which each citizen would be a virtual duplicate of the other, well-fed, well-led and well subdued.

The American people would surely, of all peoples, abhor such "plenty" and its implications. Yet this is the only "plenty" which at the present time we could bring about even by the most Herculean effort, in a few years; the only plenty that we have present capacity for. It has been shown that to raise all families now below \$2,500 a year up to \$2,500 a year would increase consumption by sixteen billions; and that to add \$1,000 to every family below \$10,000 would increase consumption by twenty-seven billions. Both of these are vast sums (our present production capacity for consumption goods is only about fifty-one billions), and to add six-

teen or twenty-seven billions to it is a very great task indeed, not possible within less than five or ten years. And even when it was accomplished, it would be far from any real "plenty." The unfulfilled consumptive desires of the American people at the present time would require, in the opinion of myself and other economists, a production *at least three times the production of consumption goods in 1929*. This means a total of 210 billions of production of consumption goods. The production capacity of the country will have to be *enlarged by four times* in order to attain such a desirable stage, and it will take twenty years to accomplish it, even on the most optimistic prediction. Fifty years is the time such an increase has required in our past history. It will not take fifty years this time, because of our far higher technical efficiency, and because there is great and determined interest today in the related problems of distribution of wealth along more humane and just lines.

We are always on the road toward plenty, and achieving it in some goods (usually when it is no longer so desirable), but desire is the imp which upsets all neat calculations and rigid fixities, for it always sets itself a little farther out of reach. And it is well that it does! There never will be, nor should be, an "age of plenty." Human psychology and its desires will see to that. Efforts to impose static "plenty" will necessarily mean efforts to impose rigidity; to curb desire and regiment it. Curbing desire is akin to curbing life. The human creature, as well as his economy, has no "capacity for plenty" that he can endure—unless he is dying.



# Britain Wields the Economic Big Stick

BY G. E. W. JOHNSON

*The English experiment with the modern uses of an unfavorable balance of trade*

FOR nearly ninety years Britain was the classical land of free trade. Her political leaders had embraced with enthusiasm the principles formulated by Adam Smith and carried to victory by Richard Cobden: each country should specialize in the production of those commodities which it produces more cheaply—in economic terminology, more efficiently—than any other country. As imports are always balanced by exports, it is to the interest of a nation to buy in the cheapest market. A protective tariff for the purpose of coddling some industry which can not compete with cheap foreign goods is sheer nonsense, a subsidy to inefficiency. Cobden held that Britain produced manufactured goods more cheaply than any other country; foreign nations, on the other hand, produced food and raw materials, such as wheat and cotton, more cheaply than Britain. Hence there was conceived to be a natural complementary relationship between Britain and the rest of the world: Britain was destined to be the workshop of the world, eating food imported from abroad and transform-

ing raw materials into finished products which would be exported to pay for the imports. The beautiful symmetry of Cobden's teachings carried the British imagination by storm. The abolition of the Corn Laws in 1846 terminated the protection that had been accorded to home-grown food; and, putting the free trade theory into practice, the British deliberately sacrificed their agriculture as an inefficient industry in the belief that its loss would be more than compensated for in the phenomenal growth of the manufacturing industry.

For a generation or more, Cobden's vision seemed to be justified. British industry increased by leaps and bounds. Britain's fate became more inextricably interwoven with that of the outside world than was the case with any other major power. Specialization in certain lines was carried so far that the cotton manufacturing industry exported no less than three-fourths of its total production.

But as early as the 'Seventies it had become evident that Cobden's vision of Britain as the sole workshop in an otherwise agricultural world was a sheer de-

lusion. Other countries declined to sacrifice their manufacturing industries as Britain had sacrificed her agriculture. They refused to resign themselves to a colonial economy. Tariff barriers sprouted everywhere to protect infant industries against British competition. And in some countries—notably Germany and the United States—these industries, once they had emerged from their infantile stage, proved that they could in certain lines undersell the British product in the open world market.

These new developments early brought Britain face to face with a serious problem. Her top-heavy industrial structure had brought into being a dense population that was swollen out of all proportion to the agricultural resources of the country. Food and raw materials had to be imported, but it was impossible to sell to other countries exports of an equal amount to pay for them. It was found that exports were only covering about two-thirds of the value of imports. How was the gap, amounting to something like a hundred and fifty million pounds a year, to be bridged? A way out was found that seemed to offer a solution—foreign investments. England could no longer be the world's workshop, but she could still be the world's banker. The vast reserves of wealth that had been accumulated in the period of Britain's industrial supremacy were exported and invested in undeveloped countries. No tariff barriers excluded the welcome flow of capital, and the income from these investments comprised Britain's "invisible exports" that bridged the gap in the unfavorable balance of trade.

## II

The War and its aftermath seriously undermined Britain's position in several

ways. First, Britain's reserves of wealth were in large measure exhausted in the task of financing the conflict. She could no longer readily meet the demands of foreign borrowers, who turned in increasing measure to the United States. Secondly, the spirit of social unrest engendered all over the world introduced a new disregard for the once unchallenged doctrine of the sanctity of property. Foreign capital is welcomed by any country when it first arrives on the scene; but, once established, it is regarded as legitimate game for socialistic experiments. Russia led the way when she confiscated all foreign holdings in the revolution of 1917; Indian nationalists promise to mete out the same treatment to British investments in India if once they gain control of that country. Not so drastic as the threat to the principal of the investment, but scarcely less annoying, is the spreading tendency of many countries to restrict or prohibit the transfer of interest or profits to the investors residing in another country. The result has been to make the British investor chary of sinking his money in foreign ventures. The American bankers who, with far less experience of foreign lending, eagerly rushed in to fill the gap left by Britain's partial withdrawal from the field of international finance during the post-War period, have been badly bitten by the wholesale defaults of recent years.

Finally, there has grown up in Britain a tendency to question the social value of foreign investments, entirely apart from the grave risks attaching to the security of such holdings. In particular, economists of a newer school have begun to ask whether there is not some connection between the high level of unemployment that has plagued Britain ever since the end of the War and



the high level of foreign investments. Capital invested abroad gives employment to foreign, not to British, workers. The income from such capital accrues to a relatively small class of the population. Instead of percolating down to the British masses in a normal and wholesome manner in the form of wages, it has to be distributed in the form of taxation to provide unemployment relief and other social services. It is argued that though capital invested in Britain might bring in a smaller initial return to the investor, it would be safer in the long run and, by promoting domestic employment, conduce to a healthier economic order.

The cumulative effect of all these tendencies has been to spread a feeling of popular distrust for the whole notion of foreign investments. From time to time in periods of financial stringency the government has prohibited foreign flotations altogether. Everything has been done to encourage investment in domestic instead of foreign enterprises, and this policy has been reflected in the increasing proportion of domestic offerings on the London market. In 1913 only eighteen per cent of the total flotations on the London market were intended for investment within Great Britain; in 1928 the proportion had risen to seventy-four per cent.

### III

But if Britain is no longer to equalize the unfavorable balance of trade by means of foreign investments, she must either reduce her imports or increase her exports. The most appealing argument used by the Conservative party in advocating tariffs, quotas, embargoes and similar devices for the restriction of trade was that it would afford a weapon for bargaining with other countries and

bringing pressure to bear upon them to admit a higher proportion of British goods. Such countries would not believe the economists who warned them that their exports would automatically decline if they raised their tariffs, but perhaps they would be convinced by an object lesson if imports from such countries were limited by quotas deliberately imposed by the British Government. So ran the argument. The British electorate had decisively defeated Joseph Chamberlain in 1906 and Stanley Baldwin in 1923 when they had sought a mandate for a tariff policy; but the financial crisis of 1931, which led to the collapse of the Labor Government and its replacement by a National Coalition Government, afforded the opportunity the Conservatives had so long yearned for. The National Government appealed to the British electorate for a free hand—a "doctor's mandate," as Ramsay MacDonald called it—and got it by a thumping majority. With Joseph Chamberlain's son Neville appointed Chancellor of the Exchequer to succeed the adamant free trader Lord Snowden, the new Government promptly threw overboard the ark of the covenant containing the sacred scrolls of the prophets Smith and Cobden, and embarked upon what might be termed a "spirited" economic policy.

The British do not, and can not, expect to use their tariff policy to make Great Britain a self-contained country. The sheer impossibility of growing enough food at home to feed the population is sufficient to block that course. There was, indeed, a project, sponsored by industrialists like the late Lord Melchett and publishers like the Canadian-born Lord Beaverbrook, to transform the Empire as a whole into a self-contained economic unit. But the scarcely

concealed fiasco of the Imperial Economic Conference at Ottawa in 1932 showed that this was a practical impossibility so far as the self-governing dominions are concerned. There are, however, indications that Britain may attempt a partial application of this policy on a more restricted scale in the Crown Colonies.

As has been already pointed out, the avowed purpose of the new economic restrictions was to give the British Government something to bargain with in its dealings with foreign powers. Although the bargaining was supposedly to be confined to the purely economic field, there have been some very interesting manifestations of how difficult it is to resist the temptation to use the economic weapon to gain political ends. In the Nineteenth Century, when some foreign power held British subjects in durance vile or defaulted on its obligations, the British sense of national honor made it almost *de rigueur* to dispatch battleships and punitive expeditions to obtain adequate reparation. Today these devices are no longer possible; but it has occurred to the present National Government of Great Britain that economic reprisals provide a very serviceable substitute as a means of bringing offending nations to book. With all the enthusiasm of a convert to a new faith—or of a child with a new toy, whichever simile may be more appropriate—the British Government has been clapping on tariffs, quotas and embargoes at the slightest provocation. A resort to such devices has the advantage of arousing scant moral indignation among neutral onlookers—who may indeed stand to profit from the situation—and at the same time may pinch the nation against which they are directed with no little severity.

## IV

The first country to feel the sharp edge of the new policy was the Irish Free State. It will be recalled that when the Free State was established in 1922, the Sinn Feiners split into two factions. The Cosgrave faction was prepared to compromise with Great Britain on the basis of equality within the Empire, but the de Valera faction wanted an independent republic at all costs. Mr. Cosgrave held the reins of power for a decade, but in the election of February, 1932, he was defeated by Mr. de Valera, who succeeded him as President of the Executive Council. De Valera immediately took steps to relax the bonds linking the Free State to Great Britain and, among other measures, abolished the oath of allegiance to the King. A more concrete move on his part was his determination to suspend the payment of land annuities to Great Britain. In the days when the Free State was still a part of the United Kingdom, the British Government had sponsored a loan on the London market, the proceeds of which had been used to buy out the Irish landlords. The money was conceived to have been lent to the former tenants, who now became the owners of the land, and they were required to pay the government an annual sum of three million pounds to provide the interest and sinking fund on the loan. The Cosgrave régime had agreed to continue the collection of these annuities on behalf of the British Government. But when de Valera became head of the Free State, he announced that he intended to discontinue remitting the annuities to London. Unfortunately for him, however, he had come into power only a few months after the triumph of the National Government in



Great Britain, which was busily engaged in sharpening its economic teeth.

Preliminary negotiations having ended in deadlock, the Irish Free State on June 30, 1932, defaulted on the instalment of land annuities then falling due. At once Mr. J. H. Thomas, Secretary for the Dominions, a one-time railway worker than whom there is now no stauncher upholder of Britain's imperial prestige, sprang into action. As a means of recovering the unpaid annuities, a special bill was rushed through the House of Commons on July 8 empowering the Treasury to levy duties up to one hundred per cent on imports from the Irish Free State. So steep a tariff, if actually imposed, would have been prohibitive in its effect and disastrous to the Free State's foreign trade. For while the Free State could have retaliated with a counter-embargo, she could have sustained the burdens of such a trade war much less readily than Britain. The attainment of political independence by the Irish Free State had not diminished by one whit her economic dependence on England, which furnishes almost the sole market for Free State exports. In 1931 ninety-four per cent of the Free State's exports—thirty-five out of thirty-seven million pounds—were consigned to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. On the other hand, though British sales to the Free State were somewhat larger, they represented little more than eight per cent of all British exports. A complete cessation of trade between the two countries would therefore have been a major disaster for the Irish Free State and no more than a minor inconvenience for Britain. However, it was not the British intention to strangle Irish trade, but to collect the annuities by an indirect route.

The duties actually announced were twenty per cent *ad valorem*. On July 15, the day on which the new tariff went into effect, de Valera paid a last-minute visit to Ramsay MacDonald in London, but neither was willing to budge from the position he had already assumed. Even while de Valera was still in England, a bill providing for retaliatory duties on British coal and manufactures was passed by the Dáil Eireann.

The Irish farmer now found himself in the unhappy position of an inoffensive onlooker who is being buffeted by both parties to a dispute. He was threatened with the loss of the British market to Danish and other competitors not affected by the new British tariff. At the same time, he was still obliged to pay the land annuities to the de Valera Government, which, without much apparent justification, insisted on collecting them though it was no longer remitting them to the British Government. In adopting this rather unsympathetic attitude toward the farmers, de Valera was apparently expressing his resentment at the fact that they were for the most part supporters of his predecessor and rival Cosgrave. The upshot was a wave of social unrest amongst the farmers, and the emergence of a Blue Shirt movement on Fascist lines. To avert the complete ruin of the countryside, de Valera was at last driven to pay bounties to the farmers on meat and cattle exported to the United Kingdom, so as to enable them to lower their prices sufficiently to surmount the tariff wall. The result has been that, through this devious route, the British Government has been collecting a substantial portion of the defaulted annuities.

The economic war has continued without interruption for two and a half years. Trade between the two countries

has been drastically curtailed. Exports from the Irish Free State to the United Kingdom have been halved from thirty-five million pounds in 1931 to seventeen million in 1933; British exports to the Free State have shrunk from thirty-nine million pounds in 1931 to twenty-three million in 1933. While not all of this decline can be attributed exclusively to the effects of the economic war, a comparison with other trade statistics leaves no doubt that it is the decisive factor.

It is difficult to say how the struggle will end. De Valera has not budged from the position he set forth in the Dáil Eireann on October 19, 1932. "The tariff is bound to cause suffering to the Irish people," said de Valera. "But I believe that as a result of reorganization of the nation's economic life the Free State will be relieved of its dangerous dependence on Britain. The position now is that Britain can use the Free State's dependence on the British market to try to compel us to bow to her will. This government will not bow. It will defend the people's rights and make whatever economic adjustments may be necessary." In line with prevailing tendencies in the world, it is de Valera's objective to transform the Free State from an English "ranch" into a self-contained country, producing its manufactures at home instead of importing them from England, and raising wheat for domestic consumption instead of cattle for shipment to England. He has adopted the philosophical point of view that the British economic policy is really a blessing in disguise and will facilitate the attainment of his own objective, although compelling him to travel somewhat faster toward his goal than he had intended.

But although de Valera has refused

to yield on the annuities question, there can be little doubt that the fear of a complete embargo on Free State exports to the United Kingdom is the one factor that has so far deterred him from bringing to a head his policy of complete secession from the British Commonwealth of Nations. Such at any rate would seem to be the import of the letter sent by President de Valera to Secretary Thomas on November 29, 1933, in which he pointedly asked whether the British Government would "treat as a cause of war or other aggressive action a decision of the Irish people to sever their connection with the Commonwealth." Mr. Thomas refused to disclose whether the pistol in his hand was loaded. "Since His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom," he replied, "are unable to accept the assumption . . . that lasting friendship can not be attained on the basis of the present relationship, they do not see any grounds for answering a question which is founded on that assumption."

So the matter still stands at the present writing. It would seem that de Valera's decision to cut the painter will be largely dependent on his ability to break the economic bonds that now tie the Irish Free State to Great Britain. But if the economic big stick wielded by Britain has deterred de Valera from taking the final step, it has not availed to make him retreat from the stand he has already taken. Far more striking have been the signal victories attained by Britain through the application of economic pressure over two much bigger powers—Russia and Germany.

## V

The British Government had long been dissatisfied with the status of its



trade with Soviet Russia. For their purchases in Britain the Russians were demanding unusually favorable credit facilities, and yet they were buying far less than they sold. In order to conform with the Ottawa agreements, moreover, Britain was anxious to switch some of its import trade with Russia to the dominions. Accordingly, on October 17, 1932, the British Government gave the Soviet Union the stipulated six months' notice of its intention to terminate the commercial treaty then regulating their trade relations.

In March of 1933, while the two countries were in the midst of negotiations for a revised agreement, an event occurred that was to give rise to the most dramatic case in which Britain has applied her new economic weapon. This was the arrest in Moscow of six British engineers employed by the Metropolitan-Vickers Electrical Company on charges of military and economic espionage, sabotage and bribery. The British Government immediately championed the innocence of the accused and took the attitude that British subjects were being used for "speculative treason trials staged for reasons of internal politics." On March 12 Sir Esmond Ovey, the British ambassador at Moscow, got in touch with Maxim Litvinov, the Commissar for Foreign Affairs, and warned him that the Soviet Government "must refrain from being drawn by excessive zeal of the police into trumping up frivolous, fantastic charges against a friendly, reputable British company. Otherwise the conclusion of a trade agreement would be pointless." Sir Esmond's protest, however, was treated with scant consideration. When he returned to the attack on March 28 to warn the Soviet Government of economic reprisals to be taken if the trial of

the engineers was not abandoned, he received a curt rebuff from Litvinov. Making a pointed reference to Sir Esmond's former service as Minister to Mexico, Litvinov told him that "such diplomatic methods might, perhaps, succeed sometimes in Mexico, but in the U.S.S.R. they were doomed beforehand to failure." Upon being informed of the crusty attitude of Soviet officialdom, the British Government forthwith recalled Sir Esmond from Moscow.

On April 4 Sir John Simon, the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, introduced a bill in the House of Commons empowering the Government to declare an embargo on Russian goods if the British engineers should be sent to prison. The bill became law within a few days. The following comment of the London *Times* reflected the prevailing British sentiment: "For any justice the accused Britons are to get they can look, not to a packed court subservient to their persecutors, nor to attorneys terrorized by the OGPU, but solely to such influences as the British Government, backed by an indignant public opinion, can bring to bear in their behalf."

On April 12 the trial of the British engineers began. One of the defendants, MacDonald, seriously hampered the efforts being made in his behalf by unreservedly confessing his guilt to all the charges. The other five staunchly proclaimed their innocence. The British Government took the attitude that MacDonald had been terrorized into making his confession, and Sir John Simon flatly denied that he had ever been connected with the British intelligence service. On April 19 the Soviet court announced its verdict. MacDonald was sentenced to two years' imprisonment and another engineer named Thornton

to three years'. Three other engineers were ordered deported and one was acquitted.

As soon as the verdict was made known, the British Government proclaimed the imposition of an embargo on eighty per cent of all Russian goods imported into Britain, to remain in effect as long as the two engineers were denied their freedom. On April 22 the Soviet Government retaliated by prohibiting all purchases in Great Britain or the use of British shipping. It was obvious, however, that in this tug of war Britain held the advantage, for the simple reason that she imported twice as much from Russia as she exported. Imports from the Soviet Union in 1932 were valued at nineteen million pounds, and exports at ten million.

When Litvinov came to London in the latter part of June to attend the World Economic Conference, he visited Sir John Simon and a settlement was quietly arranged. On July 1 it was announced in Moscow that the sentences of MacDonald and Thornton had been commuted and they were permitted to leave Russia at once. Simultaneously Britain and Russia terminated the embargoes on each other's goods and resumed negotiations for another trade agreement.

The negotiations for a commercial agreement were long-drawn out, and it was not signed until February 16, 1934. The most significant feature of the revised pact was that it reflected the new British policy of insisting that foreign countries buy from her if they wished to sell to her. The Soviet Government was persuaded to express itself as "being desirous of applying in an increasing proportion the proceeds of the sale in the United Kingdom of goods imported from the U.S.S.R. to payments for

goods purchased in the United Kingdom, and for the utilization of British shipping services." To make this general declaration watertight, a schedule was attached to the agreement setting forth the approximate ratio that was to obtain between Soviet receipts and expenditures in the United Kingdom. Out of every hundred pounds received from the United Kingdom in 1934, the Soviet Government was to spend fifty-nine in the United Kingdom, and this proportion was to be gradually increased until in 1938 and subsequent years the Soviet Government pledged itself to spend in the United Kingdom ninety-one out of every hundred pounds received.

This feature of the Anglo-Russian trade agreement will probably become a landmark in economic history, for there can be little doubt that it is only the first essay in a policy that Britain will seek to apply to other nations whenever opportunity offers. Every country with which Britain has an unfavorable balance of trade is likely to find itself exposed to this squeeze play sooner or later. In effect the British are saying to the world, "If you do not buy from us, you can not sell to us." Only, instead of leaving this principle to be established by the impersonal operations of economic law, they intend to see that it works by actually regulating the machinery.

## VI

The next great threat of a trade war arose in connection with the announced intention of Germany to default on the payment of interest on the Dawes and Young Plan bonds, of which about nineteen million pounds are held in Great Britain. The service of these obligations is all that is left of the



wreckage of the reparations system, although they fall into a different category from ordinary reparations payments because they represent sums actually loaned to Germany. The Nazis, however, regard these obligations as relics of the Versailles "dictate," and they are therefore anxious to end them once and for all. In May of 1934 Dr. Hjalmar Schacht, president of the Reichsbank and economic dictator of Germany, who is well known for his intransigent opposition to reparations, announced that he was planning to declare a six-months' moratorium on the instalments of interest due after July 1. As justification for this measure, Dr. Schacht pointed to Germany's adverse trade balance. Germany's favorable balance of trade, which touched an all-time record peak of three billion marks in 1931, rapidly dwindled thereafter to one billion marks in 1932 and less than seven hundred million marks in 1933. In January of 1934 the figures for Germany's international trade definitely went into the red, the adverse balance totaling more than two hundred million marks during the first six months of the year. Dr. Schacht eagerly seized upon this fact as proving that Germany was unable to make the payments demanded. On June 14 the Reichsbank announced its moratorium on the service of the Dawes and Young loans.

The British Government immediately took steps to checkmate Dr. Schacht's designs. A study of trade statistics disclosed that whatever might be the state of Germany's trade balance with the world as a whole, she sold much more to Great Britain than she bought. As in the case of her dispute with Soviet Russia, this circumstance gave Britain the whip hand. On June

20 the Government introduced in Parliament a bill which empowered it to establish an exchange clearing office through which British importers would be required to transmit all sums owing to their German creditors. This clearing office would hand over to Germany a sum equal to eighty per cent of the value of German sales to Great Britain, the twenty per cent retained being the amount estimated as sufficient to reimburse the British bondholders for the £1,700,000 due them each year. The German Government would thereby be saddled with the obligation of making up the balance due to its own exporters, unless it wished to see them curtail their business. Germany obviously was in no position to retaliate in kind. If she impounded the sums due to British suppliers from their German customers, the British clearing office could withhold sufficient moneys from Germany to pay the British exporters direct, and still have the necessary surplus available for the bondholders.

When Dr. Schacht heard of the British plans, his first reaction was one of explosive indignation. "Nobody will expect Germany to accept such a clearance system," he cried wrathfully. "The complete rejection of all further intercourse with all the countries adopting it would be Germany's answer." Mr. Neville Chamberlain, British Chancellor of the Exchequer, replied in the House of Commons by charging the German Government with bad faith in using the threat of default to depreciate the value of the bonds, and then secretly buying them up at a discount. "During the six months which ended on March 31 last," asserted Mr. Chamberlain, "the creditors found that, while the Reichsbank was pleading its inability to find foreign exchange to meet its

obligations, it had released no less than three hundred and thirty-five million Reichsmarks for the purpose of buying depreciated bonds, an amount nearly four times the interest for a full year upon the Dawes and Young Loans."

After Dr. Schacht had had a chance to reconsider his initial reaction to the British tactics, he decided to negotiate, and at the end of June sent a delegation to England. On July 4 the Germans capitulated to the British demands. An agreement was signed whereby Germany agreed to pay interest in full to British holders of the Dawes and Young Plan bonds during the next six months. On November 1 another agreement was reached continuing this arrangement indefinitely, as well as providing for the gradual liquidation of commercial debts upon which Germany had previously declared a moratorium.

The success of the British pressure on Germany was due entirely to the efficacy of the weapon placed in Britain's hands by the fact that she buys more than she sells. This was made clear through the failure of the United States to obtain equally favorable terms. This country's exports to Germany are far greater than its imports, so that any exchange clearing system was out of the question. One can not easily wage economic war on a good customer.

## VII

The economic reprisals employed against the Irish Free State and Soviet Russia and threatened against Germany signalize the revolutionary change that has come over British psychology in the matter of foreign trade. The repudiation of the doctrines of *laissez-faire* by Great Britain, the last island of free trade in a protectionist world, is a convincing proof that the era of tariffs,

quotas, embargoes, boycotts and every other conceivable form of economic restriction is going to be with us for a long time to come. Indeed, regulation of foreign trade in some form would seem to be a necessary corollary of the various systems of economic planning that are so popular all over the world at present.

The three instances of economic warfare waged by Great Britain which have been treated in some detail above are only typical examples illustrating the application of the new policy. Many others could be cited that are almost equally interesting. In February of 1934 the British imposed a surtax of twenty per cent on a wide range of French imports, and this remained in effect until June, when France signed a new trade agreement increasing the import quotas allotted to British goods. In May they imposed drastic quotas decreasing by more than fifty per cent imports of Japanese cotton and rayon textiles into British Crown Colonies. In Argentina they are sponsoring a "buy-from-those-who-buy-from-us" campaign, with the implied threat that Argentina's meat exports to Britain, which are already limited by a quota, may be still further restricted.

But it would be wearisome to expatiate further upon such details. Enough has been said to make it clear that the new British economic policy has two distinct aspects: first, an attempt to increase exports to a level at which they approach equality with imports; and secondly, the use of a strategic trading position as a cudgel to achieve specific political or economic objectives not directly connected with the sphere of international trade. In the second case, the measures adopted are likely to be of only temporary application, although



they may lead to diplomatic imbroglios of a more or less spectacular nature. It is the first aspect that bids fair to have a more far-reaching importance in the long run, though it is as yet impossible to forecast all its consequences, or to determine whether it will actually confer upon Britain all the advantages which she anticipates.

It is not at all unlikely that the new British economic policy will sooner or later have repercussions upon American foreign trade, both directly and indirectly. Britain is one of the biggest buyers of American goods, and the United States may one day be invited to in-

crease its purchases of British goods if it wants to retain the British market. The United States also is a heavy exporter to many countries which may have to reduce their purchases from the United States if they are constrained to increase their purchases from Britain, unless this country buys more of their goods. The new British policy, taken in conjunction with the restrictive measures already employed by practically every nation, is going to make increasingly difficult the maintenance of that Utopian condition which has in the past enabled this country to sell far more than it was willing to buy.



# The Nodding Doll

BY SIGRID UNDET

## *A Story*

IT WAS during my first visit to Paris. One day there was a fête in the quarter where I was staying. I don't know what it was about; it was a fortnight before the National Fête. For all I know it may have been a fête over the whole city, or at any rate the whole *arrondissement*. I assumed it was fair day in our *arrondissement*, but I don't remember why I thought that, or whether I was right.

In any case there was a fête in the part where I lived. I had been waked at a very early hour by the noise of drums and a brass band. A Zouave band was marching along the street. But as I didn't know of any special occasion I crawled back to bed and went to sleep again.

But a couple of hours later, when I went out for my morning coffee, I found myself in the thick of the fête. I was staying near the Boulevard St. German in one of those quite, lower middle-class quarters with tall, dirty old houses and dark little shops and workshops on the ground floor and children playing in the street. But that morning, as I turned my own street corner to go through the little market to my café, I found garlands of paper flowers fluttering from house to house, and the market halls were crammed with people in

their Sunday clothes, and in the middle of it all the Zouaves were tootling and drumming.

It was almost impossible to make one's way among the stalls. On other days there was never much traffic in the Marché St. Germain, at least not at such times as I passed through; though I dare say this was due to my not being quite such an early riser as the French housewives. But that morning the people were packed like herrings in a barrel. The band was playing for all it was worth in the middle of the open passage; on a wooden tribune decorated with red, white and blue cloths and green wreaths sat some official-looking male persons dressed in black, and in the only scrap of open space in front of the tribune some little girls were dancing with each other in the bright sunshine.

And in among the booths and in the street outside the holiday-clad populace elbowed its way along. And the saleswomen had smartened up their stalls till the greengrocers' were bulging with fruit and flowers, and the wreath-seller had twice as many bead wreaths as usual, and the butcher had decorated his rabbits and joints of beef with paper roses and gold wire, and the woman of whom I used to buy buttons and sewing



cotton and who generally had a modest display of cheap morning wrappers and blouses at 1 fr. 95, had come out today with a great show of ladies' underwear and ribbons and hat-trimmings.

The sun was shining gaily and in the little bit of street between the market and my café children were blowing their toy trumpets in rivalry with the Zouave band and sending up airplanes of tin and paper. And there was a host of street traders of both sexes with their boxes and barrows in the roadway and on the sidewalk, and of course I looked at everything with interest as I wound my way through the crowd. While walking these few steps I learned that a thimble is *dé* in French, and I bought a lovely silver one for a franc. True, it turned out not to be real silver, but luckily my franc wasn't either. Besides this I had bought as I went along fifteen yards of factory-made lace, two charming aprons and three awful china shepherdesses, as well as a mother-of-pearl *bonbonnière*. Naturally I had no use for any of these things, but while drinking my glass of thin coffee and eating my roll I amused myself by mentally distributing the treasures among relations and friends at home.

On returning to the hotel I found a lady waiting for me, and we went out to Sèvres and lunched there, so I saw no more of the fête by daylight. But it was in full swing that evening as I went down the Boulevard St. Germain with a Norwegian friend to dine at my usual little restaurant. The trees were hung with colored lanterns and there was a roundabout and a sword-swallower in the open space by the Danton monument. And all the restaurants and cafés and bars had twice as many outside tables as usual and they were all brilliantly lighted up and crammed with

people. At our usual haunt the best Jules could do for us was a modest couple of seats at the end of a table which was already occupied by a French family, husband, wife and a little boy.

I put the man down as an artisan with a little workshop of his own—a cobbler or a tailor of the neighborhood. He was thin and had a stoop, so that his black clothes didn't seem to fit him; his grizzled black hair was plastered over the top of his head, which was getting bald, and his cheek-bones stood out in his lean yellow face, which had a kind, slightly childish expression. Madame was short and stout, in the forties, I thought, but still very good-looking, with gentle merriment in her brown eyes. She was bare-headed, as women of her class often are in southern countries, but her wealth of dark hair, slightly tinged with gray, was charmingly dressed with combs and buckles, and she wore a silk skirt and a blouse of Irish lace. Her figure was trim and tightly laced; her pudgy white hands sparkled with rings, and round her neck she wore a gold chain with her husband's photograph in a medallion. The boy was between four and five, pale with brown eyes—not at all a pretty child, if the truth must be told, and very badly brought up, fretful and horrid. But he was extremely smart in his blue velvet suit with big white collar and cuffs.

They had evidently been round the fair; the little boy was fiddling with a whistle and an airplane, and on the table before them stood a nodding doll which seemed to occupy a great deal of their attention. And people at the other tables kept glancing at the doll and calling each other's attention to it with a smile, and Jules gave it a push as if by accident every time he brought a dish, making it nod vigorously. And my friend and I,

who shared the doll's table, looked at it again and again and smiled.

But there is no doubt it was an altogether remarkable doll. It was a little china girl, only a few inches high, in Dutch costume, and painted in very light colors—her *sabots* and hair a light straw color, her dress sky blue with white apron and hood, and her face, too, was white, with little coal-black streaks for the eyebrows and a touch of pale blue for the eyes and a pink streak for the mouth. She was holding her skirt out with both hands, as if to dance, and the figure had two movements—the body swayed from side to side and at the same time the head nodded up and down. And although of course the figure was no work of art, but on the contrary a quite ordinary, factory-made imitation of modern mat-surfaced porcelain, it had a curiously living look as it stood swinging and nodding—there was something almost mysterious in the mocking and winning smile of the little white girl's face.

The family who owned the doll seemed to be pleased with the attention it aroused and at peace with the world in general. Especially madame—she positively radiated gaiety and cheerfulness as a stove radiates warmth. With little nimble gestures she handed her husband this or that across the table and shared her portion of stuffed tomatoes with the boy—poured a dash of wine into his glass of water: there, now he was to be a good boy and eat his supper. Léon was his name.—But Léon didn't like stuffed tomatoes, he picked at them and made a face and dropped his fork on the floor and pushed away his plate and went back to his toys. And when his mother took them away from him he started blubbering. My word, I thought to myself, you'd get such

a fine thrashing if you were *my* boy.

The family had arrived at dessert, and father and mother enumerated all the dainties among which Léon had to choose. But when Jules came with a piece of gruyère for the husband and a cup of *crème vanille* for madame and almonds and raisins for the boy, he changed his mind and wouldn't have them—he wanted the *crème*. And his mamma obligingly changed with him. Even then he wasn't pleased—he stirred the cream with his spoon and didn't taste it. His mother took a bunch of raisins and a few almonds and passed them over to him. Léon crammed them into his cup and stirred vigorously. Then his mamma gave him a mild scolding, as I could understand. But when papa, who had been silent till now, thought he would play a joke and added the rind of his cheese to Léon's mixture, his wife gave him a little slap over the hand—she looked across at me and whispered to the child. Obviously she was saying that he surely wouldn't like the foreign lady to see how badly behaved he was.

Léon was sitting between his papa and me—and now he gave me a crushing glance, as much as to say that he didn't care in the least what the foreign lady thought of him. Then he turned his back on me and started kicking vigorously under the table, lashing out with his heels against my skirts and legs. But madame could see nothing of this—she smiled at me, and I smiled at her; and then she smiled still more and said in a tender and rather apologetic tone: poor child, he was so sleepy.

"*Mais oui, madame, c'est bien tard pour ce petit homme-là,*" said I with a proud look at my Norwegian companion. For I thought this was pretty slick French—for me. When I was left



in the lurch by the woman friend I was staying with, who was a linguist, I usually laid hands on him if I wanted an interpreter.

Next moment I was involved in a lively conversation with madame, who assured me that as a rule Léon was such a good, obedient, well brought-up boy. I nodded and contributed such phrases and expression as I knew, at the points which seemed appropriate, and replied as well as I was able, when I understood what she was saying. With "*N'est-ce pas?*" and "*C'est bien ça*" and similar current tags I was in the habit of setting off my foggy reminiscences of French lessons in my far-off school days.

When the coffee came we were all four engaged in a most animated conversation—that is, the three others were talking, while I limped after them as well as I could. Léon said nothing and played with his airplane. And then I asked my interpreter to inquire where they had bought the nodding doll.

Ah yes, they had won it in a *tombola* in the Place St. Michel. It was dear enough though—the ticket had cost them nearly three francs. But then it *was* charming. We all agreed about that—*trou charmante*, I said.

Afterwards I dragged my companion down to the Place St. Michel, up and down the boulevard and round about the neighboring streets to find another nodding doll for myself. But we couldn't discover any.

## II

Not long after my friends went back to Norway and I was left by myself in Paris, not knowing a soul in the whole city. So I was forced to do what I could with the language. And as it was too dull to stay there week after week with-

out uttering a sound, beyond asking for what I wanted in the shops and at the café, I began to make a few acquaintances in the quarter—had a long talk with the baker's daughter every evening when I went there for rolls, and so on.

But my chief source of comfort was the Ice Queen.

I took my morning coffee at a table on the pavement outside a little café. There I sat alone and watched the passers-by. The omnibuses rumbled along the asphalt under the chestnuts of the boulevard, whose leaves were already turning brown; huge Normandy horses dragged incredible loads; automobiles hooted, and errand boys with stacks of red hatboxes dodged in and out of the traffic on their bicycles. And the street vendors pushed their barrows at the edge of the pavement—loaded with dark red roses, or with light green cabbages and dark green cucumbers, barrows full of opal-white fish with rosy gills, barrows of lavender from Provence, barrows of red tomatoes and pale yellow grapes. And women and girls came and bought their supplies—they came bare-headed and in their slippers, some with their hair neatly dressed, wearing well-ironed blue aprons or morning wrappers, while others shuffled about with their hair in curl-papers and a dirty flannel dressing-gown flapping round them.

By the side of the café was a stall for the sale of ice-cream and lemonade and their accompaniments. "*A la Reine des Glaces*" was displayed on its sign, and behind the counter, which always showed a fresh bunch of flowers at each corner, the Ice Queen herself presided among her siphons and carafes of pink and green lemonade and stacks of wafers. She was a tall, majestic and opulent brunette with grizzled hair,

sparkling coal-black eyes, an aquiline nose and a superb black mustache.

I had never dealt at her stall, but one day as I was passing she called to me. I had been out to the grand boulevard and had there bought some bunches of cyclamen at a street corner. It was these she asked to look at. And as she thought so well of the cyclamen, and I liked her hearty looks, I gave her a bunch. But next morning, as I sat outside the café waiting for my breakfast, the Ice Queen left her stall and handed me a lovely pink rose. I thanked her and put it in my belt, and then she sat down at my table and asked where I came from and what I was doing in Paris, and whether I was married, and was I alone, and all the rest of it. I got on splendidly with her—if I didn't understand what she said, she flung out her arms and laughed; and if I was at a loss for a word I did the same, and then we both laughed. And after that I sat every morning at the end table, close to her counter, and we chatted together.

One morning as I was sitting there a barrow came past full of the loveliest peaches—downy and pale green shading into the finest bronze. I dashed across the street to buy some. And then some one greeted me with such a cheerful, kindly "*Bonjour, mademoiselle.*"

I turned round; it was Léon's mother of the evening of the fête. She was holding the boy by the hand, and Léon seemed just as peevish that morning as he had been when I first met him. But madame looked just as neat and charming as she stood there bare-headed in a pink calico wrapper, and her smile was just as gentle and placid, and her gestures just as soft and supple, as she dropped the smooth brown onions with a faint dry crackle into her net bag.

We stood there a few moments chat-

ting, while Léon tugged at his mother's arm and worried her to buy him some peaches. So of course I offered the boy and his mamma some of mine, and she thanked me with her sweet smile, and Léon thanked me too—under compulsion.

Poor child, he wasn't quite well to-day, said his mother apologetically. As a rule he was so good.

I declared I was convinced Léon was a good little boy. Indeed, I boldly struck out in the foreign idiom and addressed Léon in the second person singular. "I'm sure thou art a real good little boy—*n'est-ce pas, Léon?*"

To this according to my calculation he ought naturally to have answered like a nice child: "*Oui, mademoiselle.*" But he did nothing of the sort; he scowled at me angrily and answered with his mouth full of peach: "*Non.*"

Well, then I smiled—and madame smiled and shook her head and gave her offspring a gentle push: "But, Léon!" And then we said good-bye and I returned to my café.

I was instantly asked by the Ice Queen whether I knew Madame Houtin, and I told her how it had come about. She knew quite a lot about them—the husband was porter or messenger or something of the sort at the École de Médecine, and the wife carried on a little business, mending china and glass and cleaning lamps, in one of the little streets near the Rue de la Seine. They had married fairly late and had only the one child, who was utterly spoilt. They were going to spend their savings on making a gentleman of him—a doctor or a lawyer, his mother said. The Ice Queen thought there was no sense in that—it would be the ruin of the child. No—and she started telling me again of her two sons; they were



brought up in a very different way, I might be sure, and it had turned out the right way; she had every reason to be satisfied with them, now they were grown up. (She must have been considerably under the age of consent when she had them, as she had told me herself she was now thirty-two.) But Léon, he was a real badly behaved child—I had been so touched by his mother's friendly smile that I tried to take his part—he was rather sweet all the same—though in my heart I agreed with the Ice Queen that Léon was a horrid little brat.

After that I often met Madame Léon, as I called her—the Ice Queen called her something that sounded like Houtin, but I don't know for certain what it was or how it was spelt—when she was doing her shopping in the morning. And we chatted about one thing and another and walked together a little way, and she was always just as sweet and trim and pleasant to talk to.

### III

And now that I had made a few acquaintances in the strange city, I began to feel more at home. Especially after I had formed some regular habits. After my morning coffee I went for a walk—almost always along the same streets, coming out on the Boulevard Raspail where it was still unfinished. A broad road had been driven through the old quarter; some of the houses along the street were only half-demolished, so that one looked into empty rooms, where shreds of stairways hung from the walls, and the soil was disturbed and white with lime dust, while here and there lay heaps of red bricks. In one place an old Gothic church door showed itself among green lime-trees above the rubble of houses that had been pulled

down. In the morning sun this half-finished street shone so brightly—the new houses were white with fresh plaster and the air was filled with a fine, light haze over the roadway, and the outlines of broken roofs with their comical little chimney-pots, like rows of teeth, and bare party-walls and the foliage of old gardens, all stood out softly against the shining pale-blue sky.

On my way back to the hotel I used to stop at the same little shop windows, where I soon got to know every object. And since I always frequented the same streets and took my meals at the same two or three places and bought milk and tea and paper and pen-nibs at the same little shops, I gradually made myself at home in a little corner of the great city, which was quiet and peaceful and a good place to work in. But I must admit I saw very little of Paris in this way—a week or more might pass without my crossing to the other bank of the Seine.

But now and again I did make the journey, and one day in a shop in the Boulevard Montmartre, where everything cost 45 or 95 centimes or 1 fr. 95 or 2 fr. 95, I caught sight of a whole shelf full of nodding dolls. Of course I bought one on the spot, and I showed it to the Ice Queen and told Madame Léon about it next time I met her. And on hearing I had only paid one franc ninety-five she was rather annoyed that they had given so much for theirs, but it amused her that I should have found one too. I installed my doll on the mantelpiece in my room, in front of the mirror, and for the whole of the first week I gave her a push every morning, so that she nodded to me while I was doing my hair. But after that I began to lose my interest in her.

Léon's doll had been smashed, so madame told me one morning when I met her. The child was so fond of it, but of course he was not allowed to play with it; they had put it up on the mantelpiece. And one day, while madame was in the shop and Léon was left alone, he had climbed up to take it down. And then the disaster happened. —But on that occasion Monsieur Léon did get what he deserved.

And then August drew to an end and I was soon to go home to Norway. One morning as I appeared at the café the Ice Queen dashed out to speak to me—the end table was occupied, so I sat farther away.

"Oh, mademoiselle, have you heard? Isn't it sad—the Houtins have lost their little Léon."

He had been in bed for a week with pneumonia and had died three days ago. The Ice Queen had heard it the evening before in the bar. Wasn't it dreadful? Poor things, they were in such distress.

I felt very sorry—it was so painful to think of that cheerful, pleasant little woman losing her child. I had some thoughts of asking the Ice Queen for their address and when the funeral was to take place—perhaps Madame Léon would like it if I sent a wreath. But I didn't know what was the custom in Paris on such occasions, and of course in the end I did nothing about it.

About a week later I saw Madame Léon in the street. She was walking on the opposite side—in a new wrapper, black and white check. I ran across to her:

"Oh, madame—"

She took the hand I offered her:

"Oh, good day, mademoiselle—you have heard.—Yes, it is so sad."

Her voice was as calm and gentle as it had always been. But its cheerful ring was gone—so completely that it was impossible to imagine that it had ever been there. And as I looked down into her face—she was much shorter than I—it struck me for the first time that Madame Léon was far from young. And yet her face was just as usual—only that the engaging brightness which had illumined her full, commonplace features was quenched. And then, as she spoke in her calm tone, with her calm expression, her eyes filled with tears, which ran ceaselessly down her cheeks. Not that she burst out crying when speaking of her sorrow—not at all; it was just as if she were filled with inward weeping, and the poor tired eyes could not keep back the tears. My own eyes grew misty as I saw it.

We walked down the street together. And while her tears poured as though from an inexhaustible spring, she went on chatting quietly in her old amiable and courteous way about one thing and another. She had heard from the Ice Queen that I was soon going home. My mother was still alive? "Then your mother will be glad to see you, won't she?" And then she told me in a calm and natural voice of Léon's illness and death and burial. "Yes, it is sad—*mon Dieu*, how sad it is," she said.

#### IV

Next morning, when I came for my coffee, Madame Léon crossed the street; she had been waiting for me. She came up and sat down at my table—"You permit me—"

"I wanted so much to ask a favor of you, mademoiselle—you are so friendly." She paused a moment, look-



ing at her hands, which rested on the table before her. With some embarrassment and much beating about the bush she came out with it.

It was about the nodding doll. Léon had been so fond of it. But now it was gone. They would have liked so much to have one—it would have been so nice to have it standing on the mantelpiece to remind them of Léon. She had been up to the Boulevard Montmartre the day before, but they were sold out—they would not have any more of them either. Did I think it strange that she should ask—I must please say so, if I didn't wish to part with mine. But if I didn't care so very much about it—would I then do her a great favor? Would I allow her—might she buy it of me?

"Oh, madame, of course. But won't you allow me to make you a present of it?" I stammered as well as I could.

At first she would not accept it on any account. But I persisted in explaining with all the French I could muster, that it would give me such pleasure to make her a present of it.

"Oh, mademoiselle, you are too kind—"

At last it was arranged that I should bring her the doll that afternoon.

After a long search I found the shop. In the window were some note-books and pencils, together with skilfully mended cups and vases.

Madame came out as I rang the bell. She took me by the hand and led me behind the counter into a dark little room at the back, where monsieur was sitting. They had just finished their meal; plates and glasses stood on the table, which was covered with American cloth. I was left alone with the husband for a few moments, while madame cleared the table. And we tried to talk,

but did not make much of it—he was not a Parisian, I could hear, but spoke some kind of patois. And for another thing, I didn't quite dare to look at him. He had always had the face of a regular man of the people, yellow from an indoor life, with the skin tightly stretched over the large cheek-bones and the scanty black hair combed over his shining skull. But he had had such cheerful, happy eyes—and now they were the dull, extinguished eyes of a poor man. Yes, a look of poverty had come over Léon's father—it filled the whole of that little back room with a stifling, contagious air of poverty. And I was afraid it would make me cry if I looked at him. Yes—and I felt ashamed to be sitting there with my poor little present, and ashamed of all the things I had been trying to say.

When madame came in I handed her the parcel in silence. But they both got up and shook me by the hand and thanked me. Then madame unpacked the doll from its wrappings. And she cleared a place on the mantelpiece between the clock and the candlesticks and put it there.

We all three sat solemnly regarding the little doll, as she swayed her body, holding up her skirts as if to dance, and nodded to us with the enigmatic, mocking smile on the death-like pallor of her little girlish face.

"Ah," said Madame, "how charming it is! And how fond Léon was of it! Fancy, he climbed up to play with it, though we had forbidden him to touch it when we were not there." She smiled through her tears. "And Léon was such an obedient child."

Monsieur went out into the shop, and madame and I were left sitting at the bare table, gazing at the pale little girl, who nodded and smiled at us. Then

madame got up, went to the bureau in the corner and brought out a big envelope, which no doubt had been put there ready for me:

"You are so kind, mademoiselle—will you accept this?"

It was a cabinet photograph of Léon—in his velvet blouse with the broad white collar.

I thanked her for the portrait and said it was charming—and so like.

"Yes, we think it's good. It is the last one. We have ordered an enlargement to hang on the wall."—She went back to the bureau and took out a box. It contained all the photographs she had of the child. There were proper photos of Léon as an infant and Léon a little bigger in his best clothes, and there were dark snapshots of Léon and herself and her husband, taken on excursions and at fairs in the little places along the Seine. Meanwhile his mother gave me his history: he had been so sickly as a baby, but had come on wonderfully afterwards—and of course nothing had been spared where he was concerned. They had married rather late and had only had this one. And so they thought they would be able to give their child a good education. They meant him to go to the University—with such brains as Léon's he might have been at least a doctor or a lawyer, if he had lived—and a good, affectionate child he had always been. And now he was dead—oh, *mon Dieu*, how sad it was.—And now she was too old to have another child.—"But—another child—

that wouldn't have been my little Léon either."

My own tears dropped on the portraits of the foreign child. When his mother saw this she pressed my hand lightly. And her ceaseless flow of tears ran faster than before. Through the mist that dimmed my eyes I vaguely saw the little white girl, nodding with her mocking smile to us two women strangers, who sat here weeping together.

Monsieur came back with a bottle of white wine and three glasses. He set them down on the glazed table-cover and poured out. We sat drinking the wine and had not much to say. After a while I got up and said good-bye. They both came with me to the shop door and stood there nodding, and I turned and nodded again and again, till I had passed out of the street.

I had promised to send them a card from Norway, and I did so; one of those with a picture of ladies skiing and trees with an extra load of snow. But I don't know whether it reached them, for I had forgotten to ask how they spelt their name and I hadn't made a note of the address, so it was left rather to chance. But the photo of Léon is somewhere in one of my drawers, and now and again I come across it when tidying up. And I look at it for a moment and recall the pale, peevish little boy and his parents' dull look of bereavement and the white nodding doll with her curious smile.





# Justice Moves Like a Fire Brigade

BY JEROME BEATTY

*The courts in Los Angeles, by an astonishing application of common sense, have conquered the interminable delays of ordinary procedure*

ON ONE of those well advertised sunny February mornings in Los Angeles in 1931 the corridors and court rooms of the Superior Court Building were packed so tight with people that even the thirty-eight civil judges had difficulty in getting in.

Because of the general lack of system to be found in courts in cities throughout the land, more than one hundred cases had been called for trial at ten o'clock in court rooms prepared to hear only thirty-eight. One hundred cases mean at least 200 lawyers, perhaps 500 witnesses and a regiment of jurors. The confusion was as great as though a theatre with a capacity of 1,000 had sold 3,000 tickets for one performance.

Lawyers, newspapermen and many of the judges, trampled into a state of indignation, panted, "How can such things be?" and somebody nosed around in the records and found that the Superior Court was four years and three months behind in its work.

Usually lawyers and judges in cities are the last ones to become upset over delay in the courts. Judges often take delay as a matter of course, sympathize only casually with suffering litigants, seldom allow a crowded calendar to in-

terfere with a vacation of three months each year and frequently are able to find cause for adjournment at noon when it looks like a good day for fishing or golf. And a great many successful and influential lawyers like slow-moving courts, especially those attorneys who are habitual defendants in damage cases. If you can string a case along two or three years until the plaintiff's witnesses die or move away, or until the plaintiff begins to starve, you can settle a bad case for a very small amount of money. Shrewd lawyers consider such tactics entirely ethical and judges usually aid the conspiracies by inaction in this Land of the Free where the highly praised Constitution promises its citizens "justice and the blessings of liberty."

But for some reason nearly everybody around the Los Angeles Superior Court got mad all at once. People don't get mad in Boston where the courts are four years behind, nor in New York and Brooklyn, two to four years behind, nor in nearly every other city—such as Chicago, Cleveland, San Francisco, Atlanta, Pittsburgh, Miami and Denver—where it takes a year or two to get a case into court. In most of those cities they deplore the situation, appoint an expen-

sive commission which works a year and makes a report that promptly is forgotten.

Newspapers demanded action and the Los Angeles public became interested when it turned out that if you were killed tomorrow by a reckless driver your widow wouldn't get a judgment in less than four years. If a man owed you \$3,000 and didn't want to pay, he could dodge payment for four years. Preferred domestic relations cases were so far behind that if a husband deserted his family his wife could not get him into court to force him to support his hungry children until from four to six months after he left them.

These were civil cases, brought by decent citizens who deserved quick justice. Had they been criminals they would have been better protected, for our benign legislators have decreed that criminals shall have prompt trials. The legislators could do as much for you and me, but they don't. The political influence of powerful corporation and insurance lawyers, who thrive on delay, usually is too great.

Some of the older judges and conservative members of the Los Angeles Bar Association suggested a commission. The younger judges and the youth of the Bar Association said in effect: "The hell with commissions. Let's act!"

The reactionaries shook their gray heads and said, "But how?"

Said the youngsters: "By putting system into court procedure and by making the judges work harder."

Nobody ever had thought of that before.

So that's what they did in Los Angeles. At the end of the first year the court was eighteen months behind. After two years, six weeks. Today the average case is tried thirty days after the

lawyer for the plaintiff asks for trial. The defendant who seeks delay is out of luck. If both attorneys are in a hurry and can show reason for haste they can try their case this afternoon.

Thelma Todd, "the blonde Venus of the screen," quarreled with her husband one February 9, filed suit for divorce on February 23, and on March 2 was a free woman. That's service!

Judge Marshall F. McComb, who has had more to do with speeding justice in Los Angeles than any other man, told me, smiling, "We work so fast on uncontested divorce cases that the movie stars hardly have time to notify the newspaper photographers."

## II

The clean-up began when the Superior Court judges elected Judge McComb, one of their colleagues, to boss the job. It was no minor undertaking, for this court is one of the most important in the United States, handling nearly 10,000 cases a year—all city and county probate and divorce actions, and equity cases of more than \$2,000.

The gray-beards said that there would have to be new laws but in the State Constitution was discovered a clause which gave the presiding judge authority "to distribute the business of the court among the judges and prescribe the order of business." It had been there since 1879. Nothing more was needed—nothing, that is, but an honest willingness on the part of the judges to work a little harder, to restrain the impulse to please influential lawyers seeking delay and to operate the courts for the prompt benefit of citizens who have been wronged by reckless, careless, dishonest and negligent people.

Judge McComb was thirty-seven



years old in 1931, when he started running the Superior Court like a high-powered machine. He was the youngest judge ever assigned to the Superior Court in Los Angeles County. His closest co-worker is Judge B. Rey Schauer, three years older and the second youngest. Both are lieutenant-commanders in the United States Naval Reserve and a bit hard-boiled. They have had to be, for not all lawyers and judges have co-operated willingly.

Judge McComb combined the ideas of others with his own and judges now are trying thirty-seven per cent more cases than when he started. They were in the habit of opening court around ten o'clock or ten-thirty, adjourning at almost any old time in the afternoon. Now court opens at nine-thirty sharp and closes at five o'clock with two hours off for lunch.

If you ever have been in court you know that generally all is confusion when business begins. Attorneys plead for postponements and usually get them for almost any reason. On hand are litigants, lawyers and witnesses in more cases than possibly can be tried that day. Perhaps a hundred jurors have been called when only fifteen or twenty will be needed. The time of hundreds of men and women is being utterly wasted, yet the judge insists they all be on hand, whether he needs them or not.

Mrs. Clara Alt, a clubwoman in Chicago, a complaining witness, was called to court thirty times over a period of five years. Each time the case was postponed. Called the thirty-first time, she went, instead, to a reception for Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt. The judge fined Mrs. Alt ten dollars.

In Los Angeles she would have been called only once and at a stated time—nine-thirty or eleven or two or three-

thirty—and the case would have started a few minutes after the scheduled hour. Less than two per cent of the cases—as against as high as fifty per cent in some cities—are continued. The plaintiff asks for trial, a date is set and it is tried on that date unless *both* attorneys agree that it should be taken off the calendar, unless an attorney actually is engaged in trial of another case or for some extraordinary reason.

A Los Angeles evangelist was being sued and sent word that she could not appear in court because she was in a state of coma.

"The case goes to trial right now," said the judge.

She miraculously recovered and was in court within an hour.

A system first used in Cleveland regulates the scheduling of cases. Before five o'clock each afternoon a clerk telephones each lawyer who is due in court the next day, asking if he is ready and how much time he will need. Then, like a radio station programme, time is allotted for each case and attorneys are notified where and when to report with clients and witnesses.

When cases run longer than the estimated time, those waiting are shifted to other courts. Fifteen minutes before the end of a case, if he hasn't another ready, each judge must report to the central bureau asking for another one. When a jury goes out, the judge does not take a rest, waiting for the jury's decision. He starts another case.

Lawyers do not know until the evening before trial the name of the judge before whom they will appear. They don't know anything about the jurors. Sly lawyers have no chance to arrange to plead their case before a favorite judge or friendly jurors.

In many cities each judge calls his

own jury panel. The Los Angeles Superior Court has a central jury room and jurors are sent to courts as needed and return to the central room as soon as they finish a case or are rejected. Fewer jurors are needed, the time of men and women called for jury duty is conserved and the county saves \$2,000 a month in jury fees. Formerly those not actually serving were allowed to go home at four-thirty. Now they remain until five, for judges don't waste a minute and are likely to start a new case at a quarter to five.

In non-jury cases, in which experts have given hours of contradictory testimony and when large sums or important precedents are at stake a judge takes time to digest the evidence. Generally, throughout the country—especially in Federal courts—judges often don't get around to such a decision for six months or more. In Los Angeles a judge must give his decision in ninety days or he can't collect his salary.

The most disagreeable job for judges is in the Domestic Relations Court. Here is found real suffering. Deserted wives and children, often penniless, seek money for support, lawyer's fees and temporary alimony. The courts are filled with crying children, irate wives and sullen husbands. When a wife takes the stand she wants to get a lot of poison off her chest. She pleads with the judge, execrates her husband. Husbands, on the stand, usually are surly. Lawyers add to the confusion in the judge's mind by stretching some facts and concealing others.

Judge Schauer took over the Domestic Relations Court and in two months was deciding cases before the spaghetti the husband threw at the wife had time to dry on the dining-room wall.

Questionnaires did it. Before trial each attorney is required to have his client answer in writing standard questions—income, expenses, state of health, living conditions, number and age of children, etc. Judge Schauer believed the main thing to learn was how much a wife needed and how much a husband could pay and that what the husband said about his wife's red dress was of no immediate consequence.

Some brief testimony is taken to supplement the questionnaires. The Domestic Relations trials are not so spicy, and wives may be a little disgruntled because their plans to skin their husbands alive, oratorically, are frustrated, but deserted families get quick relief.

### III

Some judges have groaned because they have been deprived of what they thought was their inalienable right to run their court rooms as they pleased. Lawyers have protested they do not have time enough to prepare cases. Some of them, denied continuances they thought they should have had, got a bill through the legislature making it mandatory that a judge grant a continuance if the attorney filed a stipulation that it was necessary. It looked as if the system would be wrecked and lawyers permitted to delay cases forever, but Judge McComb promptly ruled the act unconstitutional and justice continued to move like a fire brigade.

Lawrence L. Larrabee, former president of the Los Angeles City and County Bar Association, told me: "In comparatively few instances the calendar system works undeserved hardships on counsel. However, cumulating experience is disclosing methods of avoiding objectionable features without impairing its efficiency and the plan has



the approval of practically all lawyers and judges."

Two years ago the Superior Court in Long Beach, California, was five months behind. Five months would be considered fast justice in ninety-nine cities out of a hundred. Judge Schauer was sent from Los Angeles to crack the whip and in seven weeks trials were under way within twenty-five days, which was found to be too quick, so they eased up a little. Judges have found that litigants should wait at least a month before going to trial—in order to cool off.

I picked cases at random from the records in the Los Angeles Superior Court.

A school teacher whose savings were invested in a small grocery business gave a post-dated cheque to a grocery concern. He said that they promised to hold it until a certain date when he would have money in the bank. They put the cheque through immediately, the bank refused payment and the company had him arrested and he was in jail seven days before he obtained bail. He asserted that as a result he was discharged by the Board of Education, his small business failed, his friends quit him and he couldn't get work. He sued for malicious prosecution.

In such cities as Boston, New York or Chicago it would have taken him so many months to vindicate himself that his life would have been ruined. A month and two days after his attorney asked for trial a jury awarded him a judgment of \$18,000.

A West Coast agent for a brand of golf clubs found another representative working his territory. Thirty-nine days after he asked for trial a court awarded him \$458.56 for services rendered and

for damages. A minor matter, perhaps, but not to the man who brought suit. In Brooklyn he would have waited at least four years for a decision.

A widow found herself unable to collect from an insurance company \$3,000 she believed due her upon the death of her husband. She was ill and with no means of support. In most cities she would have been forced to take whatever the company wanted to pay, for she was financially unable to carry a suit through the courts for years. In Los Angeles, through a court decision, she had her \$3,000 in forty-four days.

Some cases are not decided for two months, a few take longer for various reasons, but extinct is the plaintiff who can not get quick justice if he and his attorney so desire. The system does not bother its head when both sides want delay; it is concerned primarily with clearing the way for people like you and me when we have a just cause and deserve immediate relief. Other courts say guilty defendants must be tried and forced to pay for their sins, but they don't say when. A year or even five years from today will do. The Los Angeles Superior Court says, "Do it next month!"

Ewell D. Moore, a prominent Los Angeles attorney, writing in the *Los Angeles Bar Bulletin*, said: "There is no delayed justice in Los Angeles trial courts. That which has been done here of course can be accomplished in other jurisdictions with the coöperation of judges and lawyers."

How to get that coöperation? Through a volcanic upheaval of public opinion. What happened in Los Angeles will happen in your city only when everybody, as everybody did in Los Angeles, gets mad at once.

# The New Ordeal

BY FREEMAN TILDEN

*If the foundation of civilization is contract, as Mr. Tilden believes, then the world is really facing one of its major crises*

THE gods, turned surly, seem bent upon the destruction of mankind. If the indications are trustworthy, the method employed is the ancient favorite: that of first making men mad.

Hercules, always hated by his father's wife, was driven witless by Hera, and in his frenzy killed his own children. Insane man naturally attacks that which is most precious to him, the fruits of his own toil and virility and aspiration. Hence we should not be surprised that the present and mounting folly of a crazed world should be directed chiefly against the very foundation of man's existence as a social creature, that chart from which he derives the greater part of his strength, and all his power of organization. This foundation is contract.

Wholly shorn of his belief in the validity of the promises of his fellows, civilized man necessarily would revert to what we may suppose was his original posture: solitary, lurking, apprehensive and predatory. The transition to this former state would not be abrupt, but once definitely accepted, it would follow an ever descending curve. Within recorded history this decline has several

times been narrowly avoided, and then only by the intelligence and heroism of the few, resisting the mania of the many. For the annihilation of former civilizations, whose existence is indicated by a few broken but significant remnants, it is adequate to offer the simple explanation that covenants became generally repudiated. That would be enough.

"If you do not know," said Demosthenes, when defending a wealthy banker in an Athenian lawsuit, "that confidence is the principal asset of a business man, you do not know anything." Demosthenes was quite modern. He leaped a number of millenniums, with their painful struggle toward the development of contract, when he submitted this statement to the jury. He might correctly have said, "If you do not know, men of Athens, that confidence is the thing which makes it possible for this city, and the court of justice, and you unarmed men, to exist—you do not know anything." Manifestly, this is the truth of it. The day when the first Troglodytes agreed upon the giving and receiving of a promise was the day upon which civilization was conceived; and the day when that



promise was fulfilled, however grudgingly, was the day when civilization was born. It remained for a superior race to clothe the naked pact with an obligation that could give the promise the sanction of law; but the essence of the social structure was in the discovery that two men acting together by agreement were better off than two men acting as individuals.

The greater part of mankind is incorrigibly hopeful of getting something for nothing, in spite of all the evidence that this way of life is illusory. So, most human beings can imagine no activity more delightful than gambling, and particularly that form of gambling which consists in the attempt to outwit their fellows in exchange of goods and services. The lawyers of Justinian recognized this frailty when, in their wise and orderly codification of the rules of contract, they came to the final and personal touch. At this point they threw up their hands and said, "*In pretio emptionis et venditionis naturaliter licet contrahentibus se circumvenire*," and let it go at that. "In buying and selling, a little overreaching is expected in the matter of price." There is something in the horse-trade that defies legal boundary.

In the face of this weakness, we may imagine that the earliest consent to live aggregated by contract was one given with reluctance, and with many misgivings that a good deal of fun was going to be missed. Only the whip of necessity brought men to that gloomy sobriety in which a promise was to be binding, and the dancing of today must be put aside in the hope of freer fiddling of tomorrow. It is no wonder, then, that at certain times, and indeed at pretty regular intervals, corresponding with the greater cycles of abundance

and adversity (the shirtsleeves to shirtsleeves periods of the race), the basic social contract, which is the sanctity of promises, comes into renewed hazard.

## II

No person of composed mind and of any acquaintance with the past can fail to observe that civilization has arrived at one more of its recurrent tests, in which the tensile strength of the chain that keeps individuals from being redispersed into barbarism is exactly determined by the weight of repudiated promises it can bear. This chain is truly the *vinculum juris* of the Romans, on a much vaster scale than those words implied. Not only individuals, but partnerships and companies, lesser and greater units of government, are busily engaged in tampering with this bond of contractual confidence with the purpose of effecting specific reliefs, without entailing a general collapse. For in the latter case there would be no benefit.

When we remember that the vital principle of the contract inheres in the intelligently directed selfishness of man, which encouraged him to put aside the immediate interest for the distant but greater good, the naïveté of responsible persons who believe they can steal any lasting advantage becomes almost pathetic. They are in the case of those who spend their last moments on a sinking ship in looting the merchandise of the cargo, forgetting that when they have plundered they have no place to go, and no chance of enjoying the fruits of their unsocial act. If you default, then I default, whereupon we all default; try to take a profit from that!

Of course, wherever there are contracts there are violations; this must be so until perfection arrives. The repudiation of any specific covenant is of slight

importance. The habitual felon is not necessarily a person of feeble intelligence. Neither is he who refuses to contract, or, having contracted, has done so with the deliberate intent to defraud. In both instances, a powerful egotism may inform the delinquent that he will be better off by subscribing to no social order; that by skirmishing on the fringe of the compliant majority, he can pick up a richer living than they. The law provides penalties for these nonjurors when they can be laid by the heels. It was only in the earliest experimental period that the principle of contract was menaced by such dissenters.

It is when repudiation ceases to be casual, and becomes the subject of a new theory of conduct based upon it, on the plea of moral or economic progress, that the principle is in danger. We then find enrolled along the attacking force not merely the unenlightened, the lone wolves, the discontented, the impoverished and the demagogues, but a new and far more dangerous class of innovators, recruited from that part of society which, having risen highest, has farthest to fall. The greatest assaults upon civilized society are always led by those who, possessing wealth without habituation, or knowledge without understanding, or sentiment without proportion, and above all vanity without curb, are always for marching upon some radical expedition, under the colors of high moral purpose.

Truly, the precious husbandry of the world is always necessary to be fenced from that horde upon whom the processes of education can be lavished without the slightest visible effect. They are pressing ever at the gate, ready to swarm through and trample what they can not devour. But, upon examination, it will be found that when the bars are

let down, it is by certain beneficiaries of conservation sometimes animated by misdirected benevolence; oftener by restlessness, a love of dramatic novelty or the malice that springs from incapacity.

In the region of politics, such a man was Jean-Jacques Rousseau, who chose soft boudoirs, but praised the rugged savage life; who had no effective morals, but luxuriated in moral theory; who was impotent in friendship toward men, but reeked with a doctrine of brotherhood. A sufficient number of Rousseaus, of Rousseau-cules, can be heard and seen in the political and economic scene of the moment. But whereas Jean-Jacques was an inspired lunatic and a consummate artist, these contemporaries are neither artists nor inspired. They are simply busy and windy. Yet the times are propitious for Cleons. Our hardships are heavy; and even heavier is the disappointment of those hopes of perpetual prosperity, raised in a period when promissory notes were mistaken for cash.

### III

So, with such provocation and under such leadership, we see powerful forces being brought to bear to contrive a nullification of pledges of faith unfortunately, unwisely or flippantly made: sophisms multiply; and there is vague idealism, supposed to spring from generosity of spirit or political need, about "the greatest good of the greatest number," as though that excellent condition had been waiting thousands of years for the present generation to discover. And since the majority of modern contracts take the form of an indebtedness, in goods, services or money, it follows that the conflict will appear to have creditors ranged upon



one side, and debtors upon the other.

I say, it appears, for the truth is not there: in any engagement between those who do and those who do not actively support the strict observance of contracts, the battle is really between the forces of civilization and disintegration. But since it is not possible for many minds to encompass an abstract idea, much less to weep about one; and since it is possible for every one to sympathize with a distressed debtor, and to hate a prosperous and persistent creditor, the simple device of political dramaturgy is to place in scene two interesting antagonists: the man who received and can not pay, or would rather not pay; and the man who gave, and is disposed to enforce the covenant. In such a presentation, rash sentiment does not fail to perceive who is the hero, and who the villain, for two passions work simultaneously: first, the feeling of sympathy for the under-dog; second, the inextinguishable envy that delights in seeing wealth and pride toppled. This fallacy and these blind emotions are, however, not so mischievous in themselves; they are only what had originally to be overcome in the development of justice, and what justice must be prepared coolly but understandingly to ignore.

The real danger and the emergency derive from the fact that the resistance of law to the same fallacies is surely breaking down. Daily it becomes more apparent that the courts are no longer scrutinizing the contract with a view of deciding what was the intent—and when the statements are cloudy, or the agreement proper in spirit but irregular in detail, exercising the function of equity—but of applying a large programme of interpretation which has to do with the consequences of perform-

ance. This, so far as the principle of contract is concerned, is fatal, for decisions rendered on that basis can reflect merely the limited reasoning of a judge, or a group of judges, as to the merits of a transitory condition, or perhaps partisan polity. The man in the street can do that, perhaps with as much keenness as any other guesser.

We hear something, at least among readers of Plutarch, of the salutary *seisacthea*, or burden-lifting, decreed by Solon when he was called to rescue the tottering Athenian city-state. By his decrees, Solon "made a pound, which before passed for seventy-three drachmas, go for a hundred, which proved a considerable benefit to those that were to discharge debts," and made other social changes, presumably affecting existing contracts. It should be noted, however, that he did these things, if he did them at all (for Plutarch, though the most honorable of biographers, wrote seven centuries after Solon was born), as Dictator, in a state of alarm when constitutional guarantees were suspended. The principle of contract is not endangered by being wholly stayed, while extra-legal powers supersede it. The Roman Senate, as a legislative body, did not cease to exist because some tyrant dispersed it, but only when, unhampered by major force, it failed to exert its normal functions, or betrayed the idea by which it had being. And this is quite aside from the question whether the employment of dictatorial power ever cures those social disabilities and inequalities which are offered as its apology. In a verse quoted by Plutarch and credited to Solon himself, the law-giver states in his own honor that—

The mortgage-stones that covered her [Athens]  
Removed,—the land that was a slave is free.  
But the mortgage-stones reappeared

many times in the course of the next centuries. Glotz says that agrarian pauperism was always the cancer of Greece, and that when she went down in a whirlwind, "her last defenders fell with promises of sharing land and abolishing debts, on their lips." If the repudiation of contract, including the remission or lightening of debts contrary to the bond, were the open-sesame to perfect justice and prosperity, the gods would have come down from Olympus and joined the human race long ago. The experiment is not novel.

Neither is there anything new about the abrogations by which governments cheat their own subjects, or swindle each other. Almost as soon as there was coinage there was coin-clipping and coin-sweating; degradation of the standard of value; surcharging; and as soon as the use of paper symbols came into wide employment, the emission of unredeemable inflation money. Dionysius of Syracuse ordered his creditors to present themselves with all their coin, and then doubled its purchasing power by means of an over-stamp, thus not only wiping out his government debt, but putting himself handsomely in pocket. At least the half of all economic history is concerned with the tragedy-comedy of governments getting into debt by extravagance and trying to get out by fraud. A good deal of the other half is concerned with individuals attempting to do the same thing. But governments have the advantage over individuals in this respect, since they are immune from the police power, because they control it. Indeed, it is axiomatic that if the commercial morality of the individual were as low as that of his government, no government could exist.

## IV

What concerns us now, however, is not repudiation in specific instances, whether of government or the individual, but of the attitude toward repudiation, as expressed by those whose position, training and intelligence are of considerable moment. While there is yet no blunt statement from high sources that an obligor is to receive special favor if his net fortune prove, on examination, to be inferior to that of his creditor; yet we have clearly arrived at the stage when, regardless of the intent of the obligation, if the debtor suffers a loss, the creditor is to be considered a partner in the borrower's enterprise; though, if the borrower prospers, the creditor simply gets his money back, with interest. There is a romantic persuasion that bankruptcies should be avoided by such means, though common sense would say that an honest bankruptcy is preferable to a stolen solvency.

Of course, the leading spirits in the assault upon the contract principle are governments. Whatever specious excuses are given by a government for the repudiation of its promises, either to its own subjects or to others, there is never more than one real reason: that it wants more money to spend as it prefers to spend it. As all governments are liberal promisors, their first thoughts, when more money is needed, and there is a fear of alienating support by taxation or direct expropriation, fly to the devising of some means of invalidating their obligations, and setting up a construction more to their liking.<sup>1</sup> Fortu-

<sup>1</sup> In this statement no account can be taken of a debasement of monetary standard which arises from the *curiosity* of a ruler, or his desire to furnish one of his favorites with a sphere



nately for needy governments, a great part of their subjects are also in debt, and would also like to be relieved. Therefore what the government desires, and what would at the same time be popular, happily coincide, and the next thing is to declare that a crisis exists. This is taking high ground, precluding the charge that there is any immoral or illegal purpose of fleecing the creditor class. Whether he likes it or not, the creditor is going to be protected against his own base instincts, among them the craving to have his contract fulfilled.

Having declared that a crisis exists, which is not hard to do, since governments are generally so clumsy and expensive that a crisis is always within call, all that remains is to alter the standard of value in some artificial manner; and there are a number of ways of doing so. This step, of course, brings all existing contracts that involve money payments into confusion. The unfortunate consequences in respect of these contracts could be avoided by enacting, along with the legislation altering the standard, that preceding obligations should be made good according to the

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field for laboratory experimentation. I know of only two such cases in history: one being the Roman Emperor Gallienus, son of Valerian. Gibbon paints an interesting portrait of this dilettante in supreme power. He had personal magnetism, was a fluent orator, a writer of elegant verses, a skilful gardener and excellent cook. At a time when the finances of the state were at an alarming point, Gallienus held long conversations with the philosopher Plotinus, concerning subsistence settlements, to be modeled after Plato's communistic theories. He promised Plotinus a large tract of land to try the social experiment, but it came to nothing, because the emperor was soon enthralled with a new idea. This virtuosity and intellectual curiosity did not contribute much toward Roman prosperity.

maxim "*valor monetæ considerandus atque inspiciendus est, a tempore contractus, non autem a tempore solutionis,*" which is to say, not according to the new value, but according to that which existed when the contract was made. Curiously enough, this maxim was acted upon by several of the kings of France during the Middle Ages—a period greatly despised by moderns.

But, even if there were no political reasons against this course, it would be unthinkable to a modern government, for the reason that it has its own obligations so clearly in mind. If its act were not to have the final result of assessing the difference to the creditor, the legislation might just as well not have been passed, and the crisis was cried up for nothing. Of course, the government is even now not in the happiest position, for its expenses increase in exactly the ratio of the degradation of the standard; but this can be met by a further degradation, and that by another, and so on until that day arrives so well suggested by Montesquieu when he said:

"The State may be a creditor to infinity but it can only be a debtor to a certain degree, and when it surpasses that, the title of creditor vanishes."

Meantime, the spirit of default naturally filters down through the body politic. And truly, it is hard for the humble individual to see why, if a government can elude its obligations, or set the stage for a general default based upon one particular kind of contract, it is not equally in order for him to repudiate his promise, however and wherever made.

Yet in so far as he is a reflective man, who knows the story of the rise of civilized man from the cave, he will not readily lend his aid to destroy that which secures to him all the rights (and

responsibilities) he possesses. The original principles of right, as seen by Grotius, are confined to a small compass. They require only:

(1) Abstaining from what belongs to another.

(2) Making a compensation for the advantages derived from the use and possession of another's property.

(3) Fulfilling the promises we have given.

(4) Making reparation for the injury we have done.

(5) Submitting to punishment for the offenses we have committed.

These are in fact the rules of civilization; but I submit that four of these are dependent upon the one named third; all the rest must derive their force

from the belief that promises will be fulfilled.

And as no person can be an actively good citizen of a state who is ignorant of the beginnings and adversities and struggles and halting endeavors, by which the unity of that state was brought into being, so it is important to the intelligent performance of promises not to regard it as primarily a moral issue, though years of custom have endowed it with that secondary merit, but to realize the centuries of trial and check, the study of which led to the conclusion of Sir Henry J. S. Maine that "the positive duty resulting from one man's reliance on the word of another is among the slowest conquests of advancing civilization."





# Grand Opera Goes to Hollywood

BY WILLIAM E. BERCHTOLD

*As the next "colossal" development in motion pictures, American audiences have in prospect the incalculable experience of seeing grand opera on the screen*

FEW countries have so many "Opera Houses" and so little opera as the United States. This is one of the curiosities of the American scene: almost every city, town, village and hamlet has a structure which flaunts the name "Opera House"—usually with a brace of rococo cherubs and the masks of tragedy and comedy to lend a musty air of authenticity—yet few of these have ever housed an opera. Most of them have passed through a metamorphosis that transformed them from assemblies for town entertainments to the annual scene of the Elks' Minstrel Show and the recurring performance of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, until the motion picture finally claimed them for the unending grind of second run pictures. Now Hollywood seems about to rededicate them to their long forgotten original purpose, for all of the major studios are concerning themselves with the problems of bringing grand opera to the screen.

Grace Moore's *One Night of Love* is the immediate cause of the activity. Her phenomenal success at the box-office has made a deep impression on the Hollywood mind, a mind that reacts most quickly to stimuli which can be inter-

preted in terms of the dollar sign. Columbia Pictures demonstrated that a box-office success could be built on a flimsy original play starring an opera singer whose first appearance in pictures, at another studio, had failed to score financially. It was the skilful adaptation of the play for the screen by S. K. Lauren, the excellent direction of Victor Schertzinger and the unusually fine recording of Miss Moore's voice—probably the best achieved since the advent of talking pictures—which transformed *One Night of Love* into a box-office hit big enough to gross \$204,000 during its two-week première at New York's Radio City Music Hall.

The success of Miss Moore's picture forecasts a "cycle" of motion pictures based on stories which afford an opportunity to string a series of arias on the thread of a back-stage plot. It is fairly safe to say that 1935 will see no less than twelve pictures based on the *One Night of Love* formula, which in itself is not new. Those studios which have shown an interest in operatic material have been flooded with scenarios which incorporate snatches of opera. The search for operatic stars who screen well is being pressed zealously by some of the

studios, Nino Martini of the Metropolitan being one of the most recent additions to the Hollywood rolls. Another Metropolitan star, Queena Mario, has capitalized on the interest in operatic stories by selling the screen rights to her recent mystery novel, *Murder in the Opera House*. The book utilizes the back-stage atmosphere of the Metropolitan and includes several well-known Metropolitan personalities in its characterizations.

When the Hollywood scenario departments get around to linking the current interest in opera with the recent run on the biographical theme (*House of Rothschild*, *The Mighty Barnum*, *Cardinal Richelieu*, *Catherine the Great*, *Cleopatra*, etc.), we may expect a series of film stories based on the lives of some of the great opera stars of the past as well as the most picturesque of the impresarios. This may offer a new field for the talents of stars of yesteryear such as Geraldine Farrar, who now entertains the radio audience with nostalgic bits of back-stage experience in the classic days of Melba, Calvé, Lilli Lehmann, Jean de Reszke and Enrico Caruso. It is only a short step from interpreting the opera to the public as *raconteuse* for this season's series of Metropolitan broadcasts to interpreting the golden days of the opera to Hollywood's barons of celluloid. The latter might prove a more trying, although more lucrative, experience for any one who attempts it.

Curiously enough, the producers are faced with a dearth of really worthwhile operatic material to turn out even the dozen pictures contemplated for this year, for there are not more than a score of really popular arias from the hundreds of operas which have been written in Italian, French, German,

Russian and English. While music lovers acquainted with the operatic scores would be apt to disagree with such a limitation on the list, the rank and file of the audience which supports motion pictures might even cut this number down. The high spots from five operas were built into *One Night of Love* alone; *Enter Madame* contains excerpts from four more, so the short list will soon be exhausted and repetition made necessary. Though many of the best known operas are not protected by copyright, most of the performing rights are controlled by an Italian publishing house, so the competition to tie up the various film rights has been sharpened.

## II

The possibilities of filming grand opera have long intrigued a number of Hollywood producers. Even in the days of the silent films, when the producer's medium for expression was limited solely to shadowland, grand opera cast a hypnotic spell sufficient to convince many a producer that it could be filmed, an illusion which vanished with the appearance of the first line of red ink figures. *Carmen* was filmed three times as a silent feature between 1915 and 1928, giving the now extinct gum-chewing piano player of the cinema an opportunity to display his talents on snatches from the opera score, with uniformly murderous results. Not even the lukewarm reception accorded the silent *Carmen*, which naturally was limited to the opera's dramatic story, was sufficient to dissuade one independent producer from bringing out a talking and singing version of the opera in 1932. It was little more successful than its mute predecessors. Probably the only opera which lent itself to portrayal on the silent screen was *La Mutte de Portici*



(The Dumb Girl of Portici), which has as its leading character a girl whose medium of expression is the dance rather than the voice. When Carl Laemmle discovered this back in 1915, he could not resist the temptation to make it for the screen. Max Rabinoff, now the managing director of the current experiments in opera for the masses at New York's Hippodrome, was then offering *La Mutte de Portici* with Anna Pavlowa in the leading rôle at the Manhattan Opera House in New York. Rabinoff owned three music stores in Chicago when Laemmle was still distributing his own window cards announcing coming attractions at the "flicker" theatre which he had opened as the first step in his rise from small-time clothing merchant to entrepreneur in the amusement field. Laemmle would bring his window cards into Rabinoff's music shops and ask him to display the cards, assuring him that he could see the "pikchas" any time without charge. Now Laemmle, the rising movie magnate of 1915, begged Rabinoff to let him film Pavlowa in *La Mutte de Portici*. Rabinoff's insistence that the opera on the screen would "flop" did not dissuade Laemmle, who offered \$50,000 to the impresario if he would consent. Laemmle assured Rabinoff that he knew nothing about the "pikcha bizness," the deal was arranged, the opera filmed and the public treated houses where it was shown as if they had been visited by a plague. Other more recent attempts to adapt operas to the screen during the last twenty years have met with only somewhat milder treatment at the hands of the movie-going public.

But the producers are again in the mood to say that the public is about ready for opera—not only operatic

dramas, but grand opera—in the motion pictures. There are signs to document their thesis. The size of the audiences listening to operatic presentations over the radio, varying from the full length Metropolitan broadcasts on Saturday afternoons to the highly dramatized pocket-edition operas on Sunday evenings, has become increasingly large. Opera companies have sprung up like mushrooms during the depression years and, while many have perished as quickly, even the failures have served to indicate a public interest in grand opera which can be crushed only by the intolerably bad opera which most of the repertory companies have offered. If Hollywood could bring the finest stars of grand opera to the screen with competent direction and able musical organizations to support them, wouldn't the public, which has been given a taste of opera through the radio, the phonograph recording and the touring repertory company, welcome opera on the screen? That is the question framed by many a Hollywood producer, but all realize that the answer must be conditioned upon a host of considerations which involve them in some of the most complex technical and artistic problems ever linked to a screen production.

The tyranny of studio economics does not make possible the filming of material, no matter how great may be its artistic success, unless a large portion of the tens of millions of Americans who go to the movies each week will accept it quickly. It is little wonder then that the executives who hold the Hollywood purse strings have been hesitant and cautious over bringing opera to the screen, with economic headaches to be added to those technical and artistic ones which must be expected in tackling this new field. The

first producer who can discover a successful method of adapting opera for motion pictures will be hailed as one of the outstanding pioneers of the business, but the chances for martyrdom on the path to that first successful picture are more alarming than inviting.

It is quite natural that the motion picture producer should think of grand opera for the screen in terms of the standard repertory operas which have gained some popularity in the United States. But the list of operas even fairly well known to the public can not be extended beyond a score: *Carmen*, *Aïda*, *Madame Butterfly*, *Rigoletto*, *Cavalleria Rusticana*, *I Pagliacci*, *La Bohème*, *Faust*, *The Barber of Seville*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *La Traviata*, *Il Trovatore*, *La Tosca*, *Martha*, *Girl of the Golden West*, *Manon*, *Tales of Hoffman*, *Otello* and *Lohengrin*. Which means that even if the public should accept suddenly a new technique for filming the old "war horses" of the repertory group, the producers would be at the end of their rope when the first twenty productions had been turned out and public interest was at its greatest height. It might be argued that if these twenty productions were staged with the finest stars, most superb settings and a superlative musical organization ("colossal" in the fullest Hollywood sense of the word), they would live for many years and pour an unending stream of gold into the Hollywood coffers. Such has not been the past experience of the motion picture industry, however, even with its most lavish and most highly successful productions.

### III

One of the first tormenting questions to arise is: should the operas be produced in English? It is difficult to con-

ceive of the masses who go to the motion picture theatre accepting anything which is staged wholly in a foreign tongue, whether it is Italian or French or German or Russian. Even the most superb products of studios abroad done in foreign languages, and aided by English titles, have not gained favor with American audiences outside the highly cosmopolitan cities. Similarly, the linguistic limitations of Americans have dictated the early translation of important books in foreign tongues into English, if their sales are to amount to anything. It might be logical to assume that the American public will insist upon its opera in English, too. Yet, curiously enough, that section of the American public which has shown sufficient interest in grand opera to constitute a nucleus for its extension through the propaganda of word-of-mouth recommendation has insisted that the foreign languages be kept. Performances given in English of standard Italian, French or German operas have met almost uniformly with failure. Many artists who have advocated the singing of operas in English insist that the trouble is not with the notion of performing the English versions, but with the stilted translations which have been foisted on the public in the past.

"This is the only country," John Charles Thomas said following his performance in the English pocket-size radio version of *Rigoletto* in December, "which seems to have the idea that opera is not opera unless its libretto is unintelligible to the audience. For my part I think the average person would be much more interested in going to the opera if he knew what it was all about. English is just as effective a language in which to sing as any other—not so soft perhaps as Italian, but none the less



capable of beauty and romantic effect. Of course, opera in English necessitates presentation by artists who are completely familiar with the English language. This would afford more opportunity for American artists to appear in opera."

If grand opera on the screen is limited to English, the problems of casting will be more difficult, for—although American artists would be aided in their ambitions—most of the stars best known to the opera-going public, both past and present, can not sing well in English. It does not bother the American opera-goer to listen to a Polish star sing an Italian opera, adapted from the French, with a German accent, because his attention is centred on the musical effects produced without being troubled by a knowledge of foreign languages. But it is not likely that the American movie-goer would be tolerant of English opera sung with an Italian or French accent, unless that accent could be used to portray better the character.

The religious zeal of those who insist upon opera in foreign languages was reflected to the height of absurdity last year when the Radio City Music Hall in New York, seeking to reach the great unwashed masses with a worthwhile operatic performance, staged a really fine one-hour version of *Madame Butterfly*, but in Italian. It must have been a little difficult for the cinema-fan, waiting to see his favorite screen star after the business of the stage performance was out of the way, to adjust himself to an unmistakably Oriental story, in an unmistakably Japanese setting (Fujiyama rose the full height of the huge stage in the background), with actors dressed as Orientals, singing in Italian. There might have been some excuse for the use of Italian if the sing-

ers were unfamiliar with English, but the four principals were well equipped to sing in English, and the opera might just as well have been sung in the language of its listeners. A potent added reason could be found in the fact that *Madame Butterfly* is one of the operas which has proved itself many times in its standard English version. The use of Italian in the Music Hall could be considered little more than a hangover from the traditional affectation which has kept opera in America the property of a small—although diamond-studded—circle.

That performance of *Madame Butterfly* in the Music Hall was significant, however, not only as an indication of the growing forces of propaganda for opera as entertainment for the masses, but also as a demonstration of what can be done with a standard repertory opera within the limits of a one-hour performance. It came close to the time limits imposed by a cinema presentation, usually from sixty to one hundred minutes. The Long-Belasco story was clear and effective, even with the excisions which brought the whole production within a single hour's performance. The cuts trimmed away almost all of the first act up to the entrance of Cho-Cho-San, much of the detail of the second act, and various parts of the third. The result was an unusually fast-paced opera, which went steadily from climax to climax. The handicap of presenting it to an audience untutored in opera was overcome largely by the well planned description of the action in non-technical language afforded the audience by Leonard Leibling before the show started.

Those who think of grand opera in terms of adapting it for mass consumption, either on the screen or on the

radio, can not resist the notion that the dramatic effects of the opera should be stepped up and emphasized. The thought that dialogue should be substituted for the recitative (that semi-musical speech peculiar to grand opera) also persists. Deems Taylor, noted composer, critic and commentator in his own right, has insisted upon this emphasis upon the dramatic and upon dialogue in the one-hour popular English versions of grand opera which he has prepared for the current series of Sunday night broadcasts, sponsored on the radio by a coffee maker. Mr. Taylor's passion for the story as a major consideration in opera extends back, at least, to the first year in which he went on the air as narrator with the Metropolitan. In those early Metropolitan broadcasts, he talked all of the time, describing the action which was taking place on the stage, and the broadcasting company was flooded with requests that he desist. When the Metropolitan broadcasts were commercialized a year ago, with a cigarette manufacturer as sponsor, the singers were once more permitted to sing without any annoying interruption from even so admirable a narrator as Mr. Taylor, all of the explanations being discreetly sandwiched between the acts. The current series of Metropolitan broadcasts on Saturday afternoons for a period of fourteen weeks follow this happier solution to the problem. But Mr. Taylor's Sunday night operas of one-hour duration are no more than a series of arias strung together on bits of dialogue; at least, the first ones in the series—Verdi's *Rigoletto*, Puccini's *Madame Butterfly* and Verdi's *Aida*—were of this character. Opera is chiefly a musical experience, and if the flow of music is interrupted by the intrusion of such wild melodrama as Mr. Taylor

saw fit to include in his dialogue version of *Rigoletto*, for instance, the effects are bewildering. The music and dialogue seemed totally unrelated, so that the melodramatic dialogue invariably destroyed the mood left by the music and the arias. The result has been neither acting nor singing, neither opera nor drama. Most of the operas are afflicted with rambling, hackneyed, silly librettos that are childish from a theatrical standpoint. The climaxes in grand opera are not dramatic climaxes; they are musical climaxes. This fact, apparently unrecognized by those responsible for adapting opera for radio or the screen thus far, has doomed both the popular radio opera and the motion picture based on an opera story to almost certain failure. If Hollywood succeeds in jumping this hurdle in its adaptation of grand opera to the screen, it will have sprinted half-way up the path toward success.

#### IV

Opera lovers of the traditional school may shudder a bit, and justifiably so, at the thought of letting grand opera get into the hands of those Hollywood barons of celluloid who are now mumbling to themselves about "the possibilities of op'ra in moom pitchers." Almost anything can happen. If certain of the repertory operas are attacked for film adaptation, it is quite likely that they will be endowed with herds of elephants and other time-honored properties of the Hollywood spectacle.

It will be difficult for Hollywood to resist the temptation of using color in its grand opera presentations, and color might well be used if it continues to develop beyond the dubious experiments of the past. When Warner Brothers first entered the realm of musical come-



dies for the screen, full color was used with such notoriously bad results that the studio's more recent successes have been held to black and white. Even the more recent pictures in which color has been used only for special "shots" in otherwise black and white films—such as the scene of Jeanette MacDonald and Ramon Novarro in M-G-M's *The Cat and the Fiddle*—have left much to be desired. Color was used with only fair success to give the illusion of fantasy during the concluding sequences of Samuel Goldwyn's *Kid Millions*. I watched the shooting of some of those sequences, which cost Mr. Goldwyn \$200,000 for the last six minutes of the production as it reached the screen, and felt at the time that the color fantasy, portraying Eddie Cantor's extravagant dream, would never look as if it cost that much when the cash customers finally saw it in their local theatres. It was a justifiable use of color, but when I saw the production on Broadway and told friends what the studio claimed it had cost, they could not believe other than that Mr. Goldwyn had had the dream instead of Mr. Cantor, a rather costly rarebit nightmare. John Hay Whitney and a group of associates from RKO Pictures have interested themselves in the problems of color, and with rather promising results. Their experimental short, *La Cucaracha*, utilized a new three-color component process with striking effect. Mr. Whitney has been encouraged sufficiently to plan production of seven feature-length pictures under his own banner within the next four years at a total cost of about \$7,000,000. The first will be *Becky Sharp* for 1935 release. If this process is continuously developed, it is quite likely that grand opera—which lends itself in some ways to colorful costum-

ing and settings—will reach the screen sooner or later in full color. Color, if used properly, can aid in giving the illusion of tri-dimensional space, something that has always been difficult to master in the bi-dimensional realm of shadow-land.

While it is natural that the producers should consider the list of repertory operas with which the public is familiar, and it is quite likely that some of them will be filmed with fairly high artistic standards, it is doubtful that the standard repertory opera will ever be really successful in motion pictures. The fact that part of the audience is acquainted with these operas in their traditional form and will be apt to resent any tampering with them, will militate against their success on the screen. They offer countless problems to those who must adapt them for a medium whose chief characteristic is that of action and movement. It is none too easy to work out a shooting script for a drama with an operatic background such as *One Night of Love*, which gave the cameras something on which to work during long arias, but it would be far more difficult to give the cameras something for variety of action in the filming of an opera story directly during such arias. Translated into English, many of the best loved arias may irk the motion picture audiences because repetition, which displays the vocal skill of the singer with success on the operatic stage, also slows down the action and may seem somewhat absurd to the drama-trained movie-goer.

The most promising possibilities for the screening of grand opera may develop not in the standard repertory opera, but in new operas written in English which supply action through use of the ballet to interpret moods and

thoughts expressed by the singers. Some thought has been given to the development of one-act operas which might easily be adapted to the motion picture's form. They would retain the best features of opera, including those characteristics without which it is no longer opera, and still meet the criticism of hackneyed plots, lack of action, and stodginess of production. Such a devotee of opera for the masses as Max Rabinoff, who has staged popular grand opera in Chicago, Boston, Mexico City and New York, has been thinking of the problems concerned with adapting opera for the screen ever since his none too successful venture with Mr. Laemmle and Pavlowa in 1915. He sees little hope in most of the repertory operas, but has concentrated on the one-act operas which might be adapted with movement as well as musical excellence to recommend them as screen operas. Unlike Mr. Rabinoff, most of the impresarios will have nothing to do with the thought of filming opera. Mr. Gatti of the Metropolitan never goes to the cinema, probably shudders at the heretical notion of opera in the movies. Yet it was Mr. Gatti who refused to listen to the pleas of the broadcasting companies a few years ago when opera was first suggested for the radio. He would have none of it until, after the Chicago Civic Opera Company had been on the air for several years, radio technicians finally convinced him four seasons ago that they were capable of faithfully reproducing the opera performances on the air. Even more recently Mr. Gatti has listened to such an unbearable notion as a commercially sponsored opera broadcast, last year for a cigarette and this year for the barons of halitosis. Mr. Gatti has come a long way in a few years and, while he is retiring from the

Metropolitan at the end of the current season, he may still be persuaded to see opera in the motion pictures, and possibly like it.

## V

Unless the motion pictures are successful in screening opera, its future in America, so far as ever reaching the masses of people are concerned, is problematical. The major opera companies, backed by civic organizations which have subsidized them heavily through subscriptions, have faced deficit after deficit for many years. Samuel Insull's dream of lifting the burden of supporting opera from the shoulders of its guarantors by providing an annual income from office rentals in the \$20,000,000 forty-five-story skyscraper which housed the opera has faded with declining rental values. When the edifice which houses the Chicago opera was opened a few years ago, Edward Moore, the Chicago critic, wrote of Mr. Insull as "a dreamer whose dreams come true, a poet who does not write verse, but accomplishes enormous and beautiful things for the betterment of his community and the nation." We can not all be prophets, unfortunately. The Chicago Opera Company, without Mr. Insull, has been struggling through a series of desultory performances this season with a lack of support which has prompted, but hardly merited (according to those who have seen the current offerings by stars whose light has been waning for many years) the pleas of the Mayor of Chicago to the public for support. The economy moves proposed for the Metropolitan Opera Association and the Philharmonic Symphony Society in New York, such as the merger which Arturo Toscanini put his foot upon



rather solidly, have reflected the state of opera in America's largest and most cosmopolitan city.

Opera in New York at the Metropolitan has been the special province of the wealthy, most of whom look upon it as a showy social activity at which it is more important to be seen than to see. This does not mean that those outside the charmed circle of the diamond-studded horseshoe are not interested in opera. Any one who has attended the performances staged by one of the several companies which have tenanted the Hippodrome during the last two years will attest to the enthusiasm, sometimes rather unbounded enthusiasm, of the audiences there. Those audiences paid from a quarter to ninety-nine cents during the first year and from fifty cents to a dollar and a half during the more recent season. The stars have not been drawn from the Metropolitan, but the audiences have seemed to enjoy the performances none the less for their absence. These audiences, attracted from the masses who patronize the motion pictures regularly, deserve the attention and study of those Hollywood producers who would bring opera to the screen. The Hippodrome is large, so that its 4,000 or more patrons for each of the more popular of the seventeen operas presented during forty-two performances in the fall season were sufficient to pay the somewhat restricted budget of the opera company. Other repertory companies, which have sprung up dur-

ing the depression in all parts of the country, have not been as successful as those in the Hippodrome, chiefly because their offerings have been of an inferior quality. Public patronage of some of them has been reported as good for the opening series of performances, only to fall off after the audience grew tired of haphazard presentations. The important thing, from the standpoint of the Hollywood producer with an ear to the ground, is that the original interest was there.

Grand opera is at last on its way to the hundreds of "Opera Houses" all over the United States which have never housed an opera since their doors were first opened. Their very existence indicates that a pioneering people, migrating from Europe and once steeped in opera tradition, moved across the mountains and plains of America building first a group of houses, then a general store, a post-office and—as their first pretentious edifice—an opera house. More recent structures have adopted the old name, forgetful of the original hopes which went into the building of the town's first opera house. Now that hope is to be fulfilled. Hollywood's notions of the technique of fulfilment may be a little curious at first, just as the first attempts to film musical comedies were far from happy, but if the failures on the road to success are not too trying for the opera lover to endure, America's audience for opera and the cinema may in the end become one.



# Fish for the Judge

BY BENJAMIN APPEL

## *A Story*

ONE of the junior lawyers in the firm of McRedman and Freed had a kid brother who had a friend who was supposed to know a lot about fishing, and that's how I got the job.

Right away I saw I was going to grin night and day and go screwy at the same time. I was their ghost fish catcher. I did the work, they took the credit and all the pictures, a rod in one hand, my fish in the other. Even that wasn't so bad. I've got plenty of patience. My mother nursed five of us through ten different kinds of kid plagues. My father had to endure our growing up. A heredity of tolerance is bred in me, but when we had to catch fish for the Judge, that was the fish that broke my camel's back. The hell with jobs you can't quit.

It sounded swell in the beginning. Board and keep for the summer at an Adirondack lake, and fifty bucks in cash. Theoretically, my duties were pleasures. No car to drive, no kids to wash, or wood to chop, nothing but to string along with the boys, maybe help row a boat for the exercise. I got plenty of exercise.

They owned about twenty acres of lake frontage. Freed had renovated the original house. McRedman had built himself one of those pioneering log

cabins with all the ends showing, low-down and squat to the ground. Daniel Boone would've kept his pigs in it. But they weren't bad guys, only goofy.

After a month, during which time I'd taken at least thirty snapshots of Freed and fish, McRedman and fish, I'd become broken in. Mostly I was quiet. I was thinking of Labor Day. I was reconciled to the dictum that life is a series of mistakes. Then, the Judge sent them a telegram that he was coming out for the week-end and that he was looking ahead to trout, pike and bass.

Right after breakfast, Freed rushed out of his house. Freed in a panic was something to see. He was a fat man in the middle forties, the hip-high boots flapping down his legs like the stockings on a drunken floozie, his belly bursting his green lumber jacket. The hills and forests were on all the horizons and he looked as out of place as a cowboy on Eighth Avenue. "McRedman," he boomed out like one wild moose or pioneer or something to its mate. "C'mon, fishing. The Judge's coming up tomorrow afternoon. We got to get fish for him."

I grinned. I had a hunch this was going to be a good day.

McRedman rushing out was also something to see. He was wiping his



mouth with his napkin. He wore tan water-proof leggings, a parka that could be used for duck shooting in zero weather, and a red cap that the stablemen wear down in Virginia riding to hounds. "We can't waste all day," he said.

The only casual person on the scene was his wife, standing in the cabin doorway and shouting calmly. "Dinner's at two, Mac. See they get back in time," she said to me.

They stood paralyzed at her decision, two fat men who looked alike, who breathed alike, in one royal fog. I set down the watering pot. "It's fish for the Judge," I said.

She was so calm I could've booted her. "Really. Fish for the Judge." We men were popping with a sort of frenzy. "Oh, go ahead," she said and went inside.

They began to rush up and down, in and out the shanty. Nothing was ever at hand. Spoons, plugs, bass bugs were all tangled together at the bottom of their tackle boxes. They built up a pile of stuff, waders, fly rods, casting rods, nets, minnow buckets, sweaters and raincoats.

"Going to Africa couldn't be more fun," I said. "Are we after lions or fish, Mr. Freed? Mr. Freed, please tell Mrs. Freed you won't be back at two."

He heard me then. "Alice'll tell her." Alice was Mrs. McRedman. He chased in to explain. "The wife's a good sport," he lied a second later.

We listened to Mrs. Freed orate to the Freed heirs. She was personal about all of us.

By this time we were feeling high-strung. I had a hunch Labor Day might never happen. We piled the stuff in the car, the wives and children looking on. The children were well behaved and

didn't comment on their daddies. There was no closed season on me. Freed started the car up. We speeded out to meet adventure.

## II

When we pulled up to the lake after the long bumping ride over a red dusty road, it was hot and the more you looked at the lake the hotter it got. Our lake was supposed to be fished out. This one was supposed to be good because you loosened all the bolts in your car getting to it. The caretaker came out to us on the pier, a lean leathery native who wasn't built to sweat. McRedman beat Freed to the trolling seat, assembling his rod. I sat in the middle of the boat, figuring the oars and me were going to see places. Freed got into the point. Our tackle and stuff got in wherever it could.

"Fishing's terrible," said the caretaker. "August's bad. But maybe though, I don't think so 'count of the lake working, not much, but working a little, maybe trolling'd do the trick." He spat. "You won't get bass. You won't get lakers."

"We got to get something, John," Freed said. "The Judge's coming up."

"He shouldn't come up in August. You might get a pike. Maybe not even a pike. It's August." He got off his knees from near the minnow tank and handed in a pail of live bait. "Your only chance, today."

"Repeat that," I said. "The boss is set on trolling."

"No, Mr. McRedman. Live bait. Yes, sir."

"We'll troll anyway," said McRedman. "I got a hunch." He cast out a big red and white wobbler. I began to row. It was one of those hot days when you're tired before you start. My back

ached but I was lucky anyway not to see Freed's face. One of their faces at a time was plenty.

"The Judge's a lover of nature," Freed was saying. "And I've promised him it's a game paradise. He expects berries, maple sugar, farmer's milk and butter. Fresh eggs. Country sausage—"

"We're shopping in the wrong place then," I said.

"Shut up," said Freed. "You don't realize how important pleasing the Judge is."

"The telegram only mentioned fish." McRedman tapped me on the knee. "Imagine, that wild animal's promised him pike, lakers, trout. Promised him a fish store, the aquarium, and in August."

"August's awfully rotten. Lousy rowing."

"You promised fish, too," Freed yelled, agonized. "God's sake, will you row closer to shore? They're feeding off the bushes."

"They're away on their vacations, or sleeping it off, except poor fish like me." I cut over towards shore.

"Who's trolling?" bellowed McRedman. "Get out where it's deeper. In August they hole deep." Just as he was saying deep, the end of his rod seemed drawn to the lake as if by a giant magnet sunk there. He struck the fish, yelling: "Fish for the Judge." Freed stood up in the teetering boat, and the Judge's fish went places.

"Sit down. Sit down," I said, grabbing the net. Freed grabbed it from me.

"Gimme it. Too valuable."

"Give'm back that net," shouted McRedman, horsing the fish in. He used a forty-pound test line and a three-foot wire leader. No fresh water fish in North America could get away from him.

It was a goofy minute, every one hol-

lering, the fish kicking up a foam of green and white near the boat, Freed probing with his net, McRedman leaning back on the curving rod and singing out: "A whopper. A whopper. For God's sake don't lose it. Don't lose it." Freed got the fish in the net, a pike snapping its jaws, threshing its tail, half in and half out the net, and then swooping up right into the middle of everything. As we stared, the slack water from the net splashing into our faces, the pike shook the lure from its mouth, all of us thrilled by the lightning sight of its furious, shaking head, its thick body bouncing on the cross-seat between McRedman and me. We both lunged and the pike dropped back into the lake.

We sat silent like men about to die. I wiped the pike's slime from my fingers. I tried to remember, philosophically, that things like this were always happening to us. Freed tapped me on the shoulder and asked with steaming politeness.

"And why didn't you get out of the way? Why, may I ask? Why? Why? Why?"

"Wanted him to jump in the lake, I suppose," said McRedman. "Why'd you dump the fish into our laps? We got a big boat. Oh, what a fish. What a beauty. What a wonderful little pike. The biggest pike we ever caught."

"You've never played a fish properly in all your life," Freed said. "You horse 'em in. If that fish would've been played to a standstill—"

"I'd like to play you to a standstill with a club. Who told you how to net a fish? Oh, what a beauty. Eight, ten pounds if an inch."

### III

On that peaceful lake we sat like men coming out of a drunk. Then, we trolled



two hours without a strike, the partners alternating in the trolling seat, the one in the point casting in to shore, no one speaking in the heat, the memory of that missed pike swimming in our heads and making us sore at each other. Finally they decided to use the live bait. We rowed into the shadow among the stumps of trees sticking out above the lake, the long trunks of trees shadowy and dreamy in the thick green water.

I wiped my sweating face and hooked the live bait. We had some tiny perch and I used them because they were tougher than the shiners. No one spoke. McRedman got the first strike.

"Let'm run with it," I said. "Remember the Judge." They'd fished all their lives but always forgot what to do. The fish began its second run which meant that it'd fixed the minnie ready for swallowing. McRedman struck and for a second it seemed somebody'd been kidding us.

"You struck too soon," said Freed in a clear definite voice as if he were asking for a conviction.

McRedman cursed, jerked his rod up. A small pickerel was wriggling at the end of his line like a big green worm. He dumped it into the boat.

"That pickerel won't make twelve inches," I said. "He ain't legal." As I reached forward to chuck it back, McRedman stopped me, looking around like a sneak thief.

"Cut'm up for belly," he said. "We can break the law for a Judge. He's due tomorrow. Cut that fish up."

"I'm only the accessory," I said.

They were grinning like fat, mean little brothers. I banged the pickerel on the boat bottom, cut the head and tail off, pulling out the guts with the head, I sliced out the silvery belly. Pickerel belly sometimes did the trick.

When we pulled into the dock around three, we were baked. One fifteen-inch pick lay in the boat.

"August's bad," said the caretaker.

"Take that herring," said McRedman. "No use to us."

"Since I caught it, you don't care what you do with my fish," said Freed. The caretaker got us some lunch. No use fishing until five. The brooks were awful low, troutng was terrible. I felt dog tired. My hands were swollen and I had a new blister on the site of ten old ones. When they agreed on another lake, I had to think fast.

"Why not try the brook between this lake and the next?" I said. "Sometimes that works." They looked doubtful. "You don't have to go. It's an idea, a suggestion."

"You want to get out of rowing," said McRedman.

"No lake's any good now and you know it." I was thinking if there was anything in mental telepathy, those guys would have piped up: "Let's go home." But for mental telepathy to click, they needed brains. "The brook'll be cool. Don't you guys want to try a virgin brook? No one fishes it."

That got them. We pulled on the high boots. At the first pool, Freed thought he had a strike. He tugged at his rod, charging up bank and down bank to get it clear. He was stuck.

"I've told you a hundred times not to cast those heavy wobblers so close inshore," I said.

"I'll have to snap the line." His shoulders were bent, he was sweating.

I laughed out loud. It was funny to see him stuck.

"Swim for it," he yelled. "Go ahead, funny guy. That wobbler cost me a buck and since this brook was your idea, swim."

McRedman sat down against a tree and gave himself up to laughter like a lecher. They were sweating, sore because there was no fish for the Judge, in a mood for vivisection and murder.

I wondered whether I ought to throw up the job then and there, or not? But a swim wasn't so bad. I undressed fast, piling up pants, boots, boot socks, shorts and shirt. I laughed at them and they went into convulsions about me.

The pool was green and strange. I had a goofy idea that the pool and those two guys, usually pretty square, were among the raw things. Freed had reeled in the slack line. One hand sliding along the line, I submerged. Brown logs on the bottom, the enameled lure fastened to one like some mussel. I shot up to the top for a breather. Freed and McRedman were still paralyzed at the joke, pointing at me, but practically speechless.

The wobbler was in twelve feet of water, I went down and down, everything bright and distorted, pulling it loose, and bobbing up for air. When I climbed up on the bank, Freed was normal again. "I shouldn't have done it," he said, fidgeting. "Strange water."

I looked at him. "You didn't do a thing. I caught that wobbler. If you want to take a picture, take one of me and the wobbler."

"You're crazy," he said, and then he grinned and winked at McRedman. "He is a funny guy."

"It's the company," I said.

#### IV

We went upstream through a jungle of huge weeds and wild flowers. I slashed a path through the junk with the bayonet, and they stumbled behind me. I got hotter than ever. The sweat

soaked through my shirt. Exploring was a lousy racket, I thought. Thousands of orange and yellow flowers hung like tiny cups; the air was jammed full of bees, buzzing and making a nuisance of themselves. Every few minutes they'd cast a clear stretch, hollering to beat the band. The brook was full of huge pickerel. They weren't striking, just swimming after the wobblers. "The Judge would love those fish," cried Freed.

"A virgin brook. Virgin fish," said McRedman.

"Virgin or no virgin," I said, "they won't strike. It rained all last week. Bugs and stuff washed in."

But they were nuttier than ever over their discovery. At the next pool the ground was clear for a few yards. We dropped down and began to drip. Freed was breathing loudly, gabbing of the whoppers in the brook, McRedman raving of virgin waters. When they rested up they got after me.

"You got to do something," they said to me.

I thought I was seeing double, maybe I was soused. But they seemed like one guy to me, with their same fat tummies and scraggy hair, their short legs and blinking eyes.

"Dig worms," said McRedman.

"Worms for the Judge?"

"If the lunkers follow the wobblers, with worms you can catch some minnies, with minnies we'll clean up." He lighted his pipe. Freed covered his face with a handkerchief. I went for worms. I picked up rocks, scratched hard ground no pioneer had ever plowed, kidnapping a few skinny little worms. I baited a trout-size hook, fishing in the shallows where I saw a lonely dime-size sunny and a perch not much larger. The perch grabbed this



miserable worm. I dropped him in the drinking cup, cutting back through the high weeds. The bees were making fools of themselves in the hot sun. My right cheekbone got steaming hot.

"Hello," said Freed. "You got any minnies? Swell. Use my rod. You're our last resort to get some fish. Hey, you got bit. A bee bit you."

I put my finger to the cheekbone but that didn't help. "It wasn't a bee. It was a wasp two days old with a green stripe."

They laughed as if I'd gotten bitten on purpose in order to make them laugh. I set down the drinking cup with its dopey perch and soaked up my handkerchief, then I tried handfuls of mud, sand and pebbles, finally sticking to mud. I hunted for some plantain leaves but there were no ditches handy, going back to mud again. All the time they were watching me like stupid little boys, yawning, only mildly amused. "He can hook 'em better than us," conceded McRedman.

"Thanks," I said, "but why does the innocent spectator always get stuck?"

"I don't know," they said.

Maybe I'd forget the bite if I fished. I jabbed a single hook underneath the perch's upper fin. The fish lay small and jeweled in my hand, not as yellow as a full-grown perch but tintured with sea green, its top fin rising opaque and shining. I stripped off line, flipped the bait out into the pool's deep centre. Freed was dozing off, McRedman was sucking on his dead pipe, working himself into a coma.

Right away, almost, something big and heavy hit. McRedman shot upright. "Lemme that rod."

I edged away. "My fish. Keep off or I'll murder you."

Freed's eyes popped open at that. "Holy smoke."

"Keep off. I caught the worm that caught the minnie that caught the fish."

"Strike 'm!" cried McRedman.

"Let'm run," Freed and I yelled in unison.

"He's crazy," said Freed.

"Because I guessed what you'd say? Yeah. Yeah."

We laughed and then got sore again. The fish was swimming with the live bait but only toying with it. There'd been no sudden stop, no sharp tug at the end of the line.

"If you lose the Judge's fish," quivered McRedman.

"It's my fish." I struck. The line and the power at the end of it surged over to the side. I held the rod high, trying to keep that fish in the deep, but it was no use. He cruised right into the brush and logs. Staring into the pool, Freed could see nothing. I shoved the rod into McRedman's hands. "Hold'm. I'll get that lunker out." I stripped and went into the pool.

"You'll scare the other fish," cried McRedman. "I hope you drown."

The waters rolled up against my chest. This was the hottest. Swimming on the flat, Freed seemed taller than normal. He'd edged out on some of the logs, away from the bank, gripping the overhanging branch of a tree. "Right about here, boy. Be careful of the hook."

"The hook's in the fish's mouth," said McRedman.

I dove under. It was like before but this time I had a feeling of entering a cave after some animal. I swam downwards and downwards with one hand on the line as if it were a banister. Off to the left, the sandy floor was empty. The air from my lungs bubbled up. It got mistier. I grabbed hold of a slimy log,

my free hand following the line. I tugged, felt something alive but unseen kick back, tugged and yanked with one bursting effort, pulling out the fish, its long green snout and thick body not two feet away. I went up like a fire to the surface. The sun and sky seemed to fall down on me. The fish was breaking water. I howled with my last breath. "Don't reel'm in, Mac!" swimming over towards Freed. He was holding tight to the branch, his fat face among the leaves, getting excited, venturing out farther and farther on the log with a helping hand stretched towards me. I let go the line, my eyes backward fastened on the fish being hauled in; Freed thinking the fish had escaped, shouted out in agony, lost his balance and rolled in with a splash. Still swimming, I saw McRedman grinning like an idiot, and then I grabbed Freed. "Let go," he hollered. "I can swim."

We pulled up on bank. McRedman was singing: "I got'm! I got'm, right up to shore but I'm scared to lift'm. Help! Help!" The bank was two feet above the pool and we could all see the pickerel kicking on the surface. I scooped the net into the middle of the fuss, threw up that son-of-a-gun on dry land. The three of us went wild, shaking hands all around. We made a picture, apoplectic McRedman, Freed soaking wet and me naked.

The fish was twenty-one inches, about four pounds, a beauty grown sleek in the brook. Freed put on my dry trousers. I grinned, knotting a sweater about my middle. "That's funny taking my pants," I said. McRedman posed with the fish. I snapped the picture and then took one of Freed and fish.

"You wouldn't look so hot in that bee bite and practically naked," said McRedman. "You don't want a picture?"

"Naw. Who'd want it but a nudist paper? And then it ain't my fish."

It was getting time to go home. The loose stuff was all over the place for me to pack up; McRedman was measuring the fish for the sixth time. I watched my trousers running around about Freed's legs. McRedman began to boast how he'd gotten him to shore, his fish. Freed chiming in: "And my dive, Mac." They were heroes. I let go a wild Bronx cheer, picked up the fish and ran off with it.

They thought I was nuts. They were right. "I'm going to heave this fish right back where he came from."

"No! No!" McRedman wept. "You can't."

"I can. It's my fish. Who hooked it?"

"You did," they said.

"And I got it loose and I netted it."

"Sure you did."

"Then it's mine and I can chuck it back. And I'm quitting this job and the hell with it."

"Please," said McRedman. "You can't quit. The last time you said you'd quit you didn't quit."

"Gee!" said Freed. "That's the Judge's fish. You can't throw it back."

"That's right. It's the Judge's fish." I began to laugh. I laughed for ten minutes. We all laughed, then we went home. The hell with such jobs. The hell with funny ducks like Freed and McRedman that somehow make a fellow feel loyal. The hell with such jobs. You can't quit them. That's the trouble with them.



# Exit the Small Town

BY CHARLES MAGEE ADAMS

*Despite a population trend away from cities during the depression, our small towns have been steadily losing strength and importance*

IT is the fashion these days to say that the small town is on the up grade. And this view represents more than nostalgic wishing. Despite the centripetal forces which have concentrated population in larger and still larger cities, several facts warrant the now widely expressed conviction that the village is regaining something of the same status it enjoyed prior to the era of intensive industrialization.

Long before the depression became the dominant factor in everything, the tide of population toward the cities was challenged by a feeble counter-current. Artists and others whose livelihood is independent of place made up the vanguard of the centrifugal movement. They forsook the cities for the peace and freedom of outlying villages because they found the turmoil and restrictions of urban life increasingly unendurable.

During the days of flush prosperity their ranks were swelled by a growing host of commuters who chose to live in smaller communities for much the same reasons. The automobile, of course, implemented this further hegira, making available areas heretofore impracticable for suburban residence.

And when the pulse of business fal-

tered the centrifugal stream became a torrent. Multitudes who had tolerated the city because of the money to be earned there migrated to suburban towns and remote hamlets, driven by the necessity of making ends meet. The exodus has reached astonishing proportions: It is known, too, that many of these depression "refugees" will not return to the city even though recovery opens up their former jobs.

Ranking industrialists — notably Henry Ford — have been advocating just such a shift of population for a long time. They contend that the tremendous increase in costs resulting from urban concentration makes the decentralization of industry an economic necessity. And responsible economists and sociologists share this view.

It has the blessing of the Washington planners. Such enterprises as subsistence homesteads and the Tennessee Valley Authority contemplate the deliberate restoration of the small town's commercial and residential importance.

So there seems good reason to believe that the small town is looking up. However, it should be noted that the changes which give it a more favorable status are all on the material side. Other

changes, also springing from modern conditions, and no less significant because they are imponderable, are decidedly adverse. Indeed, they are so adverse that they afford grounds for the gloomy conclusion that the small town, as a unit of community life, is definitely on its way out of the American scene.

## II

Those whose acquaintance with village life is more comprehensive than the typical novel born of a hinterland slumming expedition will grasp what is meant readily enough. The characteristic which distinguishes the small town from the city is not comparative size, but rather a social attitude. It would be possible to set up a tailor-made community of a few hundred or few thousand residents recruited at random from among urban dwellers. But years would elapse before such a community could be classified accurately as a small town. For, viewed from the standpoint of social organization, the small town is the next unit larger than the family. Its residents are subject to an interplay of contacts and interests, an entire range of relationships only one step broader than those of the family.

In a village people have an opportunity to know one another far more intimately than in a city. That of itself creates a situation—not invariably grist for the ironist's mill—foreign to the average metropolitane. Likewise, the small town emphasizes economic interdependence much more than the city. The urban manufacturer may regard his employes as "labor," but the village tycoon must also think of his as old schoolmates, neighbors, friends. Similarly, the small town brings social, cultural, even spiritual interdependence into infinitely sharper relief than the

city. It personalizes the innumerable assets and liabilities of living together to a degree only one step removed from the family.

This comparison of the family with the small town is more than an illustrative convenience. There has been much shaking of heads over what has happened to the family. And the same basic forces which have worked such far-reaching changes in its relationships have also played a major part in altering the structure of the next larger unit.

Essentially, of course, these forces are technological. Every present-day social problem can be reduced to the struggle of man to adjust himself to the headlong rush of technological change. And the small town constitutes perhaps the ideal laboratory for studying this struggle. In the nation the investigator needs a telescope to appraise the reaction; in the family, a microscope. But in the small town the consequences can be studied with the naked eye, provided, of course, that eye is reasonably alert.

Most potent of the reagents which fecund technology has poured into the small town test tube is improved transportation. At the turn of the century the steam railroad was the only major transportation service available to the villages; and many lacked even that. As a result, the average small town was, for the most part, economically and socially autonomous. The bulk of its food and building materials were home products. Its education was locally supervised; its recreation, law enforcement, cultural ventures, were the results of local initiative.

Today that situation is changed profoundly under the impact of more flexible transportation. Over a network of



improved highways stream trucks, buses and cars, whose effect is a startling alteration in the economic and social make-up of the small town.

No longer is the king-pin of local commerce the proprietor of the general store. The chain grocery sells most of the village's food, the chain department store most of its clothing and housewares. For more exclusive merchandise there are the shops of a larger town, usually within easy motor range.

Home-talent theatricals have given place to Hollywood. The weekly concerts of the local band have surrendered to the ubiquitous radio. The Chamber of Commerce has been replaced by a luncheon club which discourses eloquently about a particular ism contrived by national headquarters. The Brown-Ing Club has gone into the Federation.

Youths who once would have paid court to local belles now stream-line thirty or fifty miles for their dates, while the local belles are squired by admirers ranging as far afield. And when the young people seek diversion the pleasure spot is not likely to be in the home town. The Dr. Jekylls and Mr. Hydes who formerly minded their step because of what the neighbors would say now have a "freer life" miles away with the reasonable assurance that the home folks will be none the wiser.

To be sure, these changes are logical and, in many respects, for the better. Complete local autonomy was never more than an illusion. In proportion as it was approached, it meant restricted opportunity, narrowness, ultimate sterility. To the extent that these changes spawned by modernity have given the small town greater freedom, broader contacts and added vigor, they have enriched its living. But the results can not be written solely in black ink.

Against the heartening gain must be set a considerable, even serious, loss.

### III

Perhaps the best way to indicate the nature of this loss is to say that the chief effect of modernity has been to suburbanize the small town. A suburb can be defined as a satellite of a larger community. And that is precisely the change that has taken place in the status of the small town during the past two or three decades.

Before the era of flexible transportation every inland village was, to a great extent, an independent community; not economically, to be sure, but in most of the social essentials. Its comparative isolation forced it to think of itself as a unit, rely primarily on its own human resources to solve its problems. And these resources were likely to assay sufficient initiative and ingenuity to meet a situation.

Today that village is an independent community only in the sense of physical detachment. Tightening ties of commerce and communication have caused it to think of itself—sometimes proudly, but more often fatuously—as an articulated part of a larger whole. It no longer relies first of all on its own resources. When a problem arises it turns to the county, the State, even the nation, just as the suburb turns to its parent city. In other words, what has happened is the weakening, if not destruction, of the attitude which fosters local group action.

A specific instance may point this general proposition. During the War a certain small town played more than its assigned part in the national effort. Overflow crowds attended numerous mass meetings in behalf of diversified war causes. The response to every ap-

peal was united and generous. The whole community worked and sacrificed like a magnificently coached team.

Fifteen years later the same small town failed forlornly to meet its relief responsibility. Mass meetings called for the purpose of adopting measures were a grim joke. A sound plan of local help for the needy collapsed through lack of coöperation. In the end the relief problem was dumped on the doorstep of the State.

Granted, a comparison of the War with the depression is not altogether apt. One could be dramatized much more effectively than the other. Nevertheless, these two performances are significant. Notwithstanding contributory factors, they demonstrate the atrophy of community solidarity which, more than anything else, is the real threat to the existence of the small town as a distinctive phase of American life.

This atrophy can, of course, be traced to causes more particular than the broad proposition of technological change. And the chief of these is economic, the decline of the independent merchant.

At first thought that may seem far-fetched. The relation between community solidarity and the character of retail distribution would appear flimsy, if existent at all. But to any one who knows his small town the connection is clear enough.

Before the War the bulk of retail business in a typical inland village was done by independent merchants. Save for mail-order competition and that of urban shops in the higher price brackets, the local grocery, butcher, baker, hardware dealer, druggist, dry goods man, jeweler and confectioner had the field to themselves. They owned their establishments, were permanent residents and, more likely than not, had grown

up in the town. Further, they played a leading part in a wide range of community activities.

This leadership took many forms: a Chamber of Commerce, a Merchants' Association, perhaps no formal organization at all. Regardless of the set-up, the leadership was a real and powerful factor in community life. Whenever a celebration was to be held, funds raised for improving a park, or an historical shrine preserved, the merchants headed the committees, underwrote the expenses, did the advertising.

To be sure, the motive was not altogether altruistic. Their purpose was rather frankly to improve their business, directly or indirectly, by bringing people to town, keeping them interested, and otherwise selling the community to itself. Sometimes, too, their methods were crude, not to say amusing. Nevertheless, they did make a large and genuine contribution toward crystallizing community solidarity; and logically enough.

They had a direct stake in the town. It was their home, the source of their livelihood. They recognized, far more clearly than the non-mercantile citizen, that common responsibilities had to be met by common effort. Moreover, the energy and resourcefulness which kept them afloat economically equipped them rather well to direct a wide range of community enterprises.

But today the independent small town merchant is little more than a marginal unit of distribution. In thousands of villages chain merchandising has crowded him out. And where competition has not been carried to his door he has felt it little less keenly. Most of his customers can now drive with ease to some larger trading centre. As a result, the village merchant who owns his busi-



ness and has deep community roots has been displaced largely by the chain store manager.

He owns nothing more than his furniture, sometimes not that. The only tie which binds him to the community is the success of his assignment. And that depends chiefly on his obedience to orders. Certain chain systems, to be sure, give their managers a degree of latitude in administration. A few go so far as to encourage managers to take part in community activities. But it is obvious that this part can not compare with that of the independent merchant on the score of community usefulness.

The chain store manager is not indigenous, not his own boss. He is a pawn of district office strategy, shuttled about the competitive board for reasons as impersonal and frequently as meaningless as army orders. The marvel is that he takes any part in the activities of the community where he finds himself, even when permitted.

So the eclipse of the independent merchant involves far more than a change in distribution methods. It has swept away the community's most useful leadership without supplying an effective substitute. For the lack of this leadership the small town has deteriorated from a consciously cohesive community to a group bound together by little more than the slight tie of proximity.

#### IV

The decline of the small town press has also been a considerable factor in dimming the awareness of community interest, indispensable to group responsibility. Time was when every village of consequence had its own weekly newspaper; a stock source of merriment judged by metropolitan standards, yet

performing the important function of providing a vigorous mouthpiece for matters of local moment. But today that situation too has changed.

Numerically, small town weeklies have shown no ominous shrinkage. On the score of local influence, however, they have lost much ground. Urban dailies have taken a heavy toll of their reader following. At the same time, the twilight of the independent merchant has cut deeply into their advertising revenues, since chain systems rarely use local media. To meet this condition many village weeklies have combined into little chains. The result has been a gain in mechanical efficiency, but at the price of the color and sometimes tempestuous independence which made them a potent force in crystallizing local sentiment.

Much the same can be said of the small town church. Grave concern is being expressed over the plight of village congregations. But comparatively little attention is given the situation as a symptom of community disintegration, which it is in large measure.

During the years when the small town church was heralded as the backbone of the ecclesiastical structure, it ministered primarily to the needs of its own community, social as well as spiritual. It served as the common gathering place, the local charitable agency, and took a vigorous—if not always intelligent—stand on local morals. Today it has abandoned most of these functions, not so much because the church at large has lost social consciousness, but rather because the small town has lost community consciousness.

Such social energies as the village church still possesses are channeled into remote causes. For the lack of immediate expression in action, its spiritual

vitality has withered. In other words, the small town church has cast itself chiefly as part of a comfortably diffused whole, relying more and more on power from the top to turn its little wheels.

Institutionally, the classic example of this fatuous looking-to-the-top is education. Here the motive is more practical, not to say selfish.

In the days when the village school-house was little larger and little less red than its famed rural equivalent, it was the quaint custom for each small town to solve its own educational problems as best it could. But since scholastic efficiency has come to be measured by the magnificence of auditoria and the murals of lunchrooms, richer sources of revenue had to be tapped; hence the politically potent "equalization of opportunity" theory, and its bureaucratic consequences. Now the small town school board is in much the same position as the manager of a chain grocery. State functionaries dictate everything from curriculum to ventilation.

It is the rankest heresy to suggest that this does not represent tremendous progress. But, judged by its effects on the recipient communities, there seems reason for serious doubt.

However, what many observers fail to recognize is that this cringing educational dependence is essentially the product of many interrelated factors. The small town looks to the State or even nation for a solution of its political problems because, commercially and culturally, it has come to lean more and more on sources outside itself.

# V

Viewed from a social perspective, the small town can be regarded as the most promising effort thus far made at the difficult art of living together. Not that

it was perfect. It had many faults, discernible without the aid of urban "realists." But it was immeasurably more successful than the communal life of larger groups, even under the guidance of intelligent regimentation. Now the ground gained has been lost. Instead of a cohesive group bound by mutual interdependence, we have a human conglomerate joined only by the fragile cement of adjacent residence, the components drawn more apart than together by the pull of outside interests.

That may seem a gain rather than a loss. Efficiency and freedom are the current shibboleths. Economically, the present-day small town is more efficient, what with chain merchandising, interconnected utilities, et al. Beyond question it is also freer. Wider contacts and more varied intercourse have shattered inhibiting isolation. But it is possible that these advantages have been bought at too high a price.

Whenever a stream grows broader it must become shallower. That is true of most contemporary living, and particularly of the small town. In other words, it can not have the material and social conveniences of the city without sacrificing many of the intangibles which gave it distinguishing charm and vigor.

It is a stupid mistake, too, to assume that the matter can be dismissed as merely the misfortune of bewildered yokels. In a more bucolic age it was the custom to say, "as the small towns go, so goes America." That was never wholly true. Yet its basic validity has been weakened little by the centripetal forces which seem to concentrate all power in urban centres. Statistically, the small town is becoming a more and more potent factor in the nation's life. And in respects other than dollar vol-



ume and population its importance is even greater.

We are plunging more or less hopefully into what might be termed the coöperation-conscious era. Regional planning, codified industry, controlled agriculture are only a few of the manifestations of an increasing purpose to solve our problems by joint effort. But we find it difficult to make the new approach chiefly because coöperation is more preached from the top than practised at the bottom. It is like trying to marshal an army which has no units below divisions.

The small town is—more accurately was—the platoon or squad of coöperation. It had the prime merit of dramatizing the give and take of common action in man-to-man terms, an essential which larger units lack. In short, if the social break-up of the small town is permitted to continue, it looks very much as if the ambitious project of national coöperation will have to assume a forbidding handicap.

Then what is the solution? Despite the fallacy that a critic must offer a remedy for every defect he points out, I am frankly not sure. However, I am certain that stock nostrums can not turn the trick.

For instance, "buy at home" will not do it. The purpose is too selfish, and it flies in the face of economic fact. Neither will mere organization avail, even when fetchingly sloganed. The small town is barren soil for "whooper-upper" committees. And certainly the professional regimenter is not a solution. Intelligent as his efforts may be they are at best only superimposed.

If the small town is to become a closely knit community again the binder must come from within. True, the cementing can be accelerated by leaders who have the wit to diagnose the ailment and provide suitable media for the expression of group consciousness. But primarily the impulse toward regaining community solidarity must be spontaneous.

That necessity would seem to foredoom the small town to remain a heterogeneous bit of humanity, differentiated from larger clots chiefly by relative size. Group inertia is notorious. Yet I doubt whether the outlook is as hopeless as it appears. Though the human animal is slow to adapt himself to change he can eventually be counted on to make the needed adjustment. And when so much can be added to the assets of living by restoring the intangible wealth of community solidarity, it seems certain that some intuitive, and therefore adequate, solution will be found.

If it is not, America will be much the poorer. For, notwithstanding the barbs of the satirists, the small town's contribution to the nation is inestimable. It has been the best environment thus far developed for producing individuals, because the taproots of local backgrounds nurture distinctive personality. When the forces of urban civilization combine—almost conspire—to stamp its human units with a drearily uniform pattern, it would be a pity were our villages to become mere branches of the standardizing mill. Yet that is the tendency. Only the resolute determination of the small town to regain its heritage of independence can avert it.

# Politics and the Schools

BY HENRY W. HOLMES

*Suggesting a method of attack against growing political interference in education*

THE shame of Chicago in the conduct of its schools has not been fully disclosed, and perhaps it never will be, especially now that Chicago has found its financial feet and paid its teachers what it owes them. But since the crisis in Chicago school affairs, when teachers stormed the offices of Mr. Dawes, stories uglier than those then current have crept about. I have heard it stated as a fact that the principal of an elementary school in Chicago paid \$5,000 for his job. I have been told that the examination papers for administrative licenses in Chicago have been sold in advance, at prices adjusted to the grade of the license. It is reported that a teacher seeking reinstatement after maternity leave found it necessary to make a devious payment of \$300 for the privilege. The most astounding statement of all is that one of the leaders of the protests against non-payment of salaries was quietly but officially introduced to a notorious gangster. That was all; no threats were made; but the teachers had thereafter fewer leaders. There may be no truth in these stories; and I speak of the Chicago situation not further to defame the city of the "restless violent hands and casual tongue," but to bring out in its sharpest accents

a danger which threatens public education throughout the country, the danger of political interference with the schools.

This danger, I believe, tends now increasingly to take a form more threatening and insidious than any it has commonly assumed before; and I believe also that there is a simple and straightforward way to withstand it—not an easy way, but one that can be followed without confusion or hesitation by groups of citizens who have the necessary interest and courage. Graft in the schools has not been uncommon in the past, although the record of the administration of the public schools of this country, in towns, cities, counties, districts and States, if one views it as a whole and throughout our history, is a record in which an American may take pride and from which he may draw hope and inspiration. But the graft that has appeared in former years has come to light mainly in connection with the building of schoolhouses and the purchase of school equipment, school materials and textbooks; and whereas rake-offs, favoritism and rings for the control of profits in such business still exist, something has been accomplished against these forms of racketeering by



the requirement of open bidding for school contracts and by simple honesty among superintendents and the members of school boards. But there is still the teacher's job—and the politicians have become acutely conscious of it! This form of the political threat to education is a threat directed at the heart of the whole undertaking—the standards of personal competence, freedom and devotion of the teachers and officers of the public schools.

Examinations for license to teach are not a sure defense against politics in appointments to school posts. Merit lists and tenure laws are not an adequate safeguard and may even be juggled for political ends. The really promising way to fight the undermining of standards in the appointment of teachers, principals, supervisors and superintendents is to insist that no school post whatever shall be given to any person who is not a graduate of a reputable institution for the training of teachers and that the lists shall show a preponderance of appointments to graduates of institutions recognized as of the highest standing.

This is a thesis which must, of course, be elaborated, if it is to carry any conviction. I recognize, moreover, that the standard suggested can not be met at once and universally. I am concerned only to make clear what it means and how it may be made effective in communities with wealth enough to meet it or approach it. Let me offer an illustration of political interference with a school appointment (the case is one of which I can speak with ample knowledge of the facts) and from that starting-point develop the idea that insistence on *institutional* standards—that is, insistence that school posts shall go to graduates of institutions

publicly known to maintain high standards of admission and graduation—is a workable plan for fighting the worst and latest threat of politics in education.

In a certain New England city, a teacher of music was appointed not long ago and then rapidly advanced to higher supervisory rank. His advancement required, at several points, the suspension of the rules for the appointment and promotion of teachers, but there was no difficulty about that. The education committee of the local League of Women Voters, examining the record of appointments for the year, and finding evidence of low institutional standards, a marked tendency to favor graduates of certain colleges and much weakness in maintaining the rules, was struck especially by this case and made public protest about it. The only institution from which this appointee could claim graduation was a local high school in the Boston area. He had later received a certificate from a nearby school of education for a brief course for teachers of school music. In the list of teachers published by the school department of the city, the entry against his name included the annotation "Courses at Harvard"; but it proved that although he had registered at Harvard for a course in the teaching of music, he had dropped it without taking the examination in the elements of music required for credit in the course. Judged by institutional standards he was unfit for appointment even as a teacher. I have not the slightest evidence that there was graft in the case, nor any belief that graft was involved; but there was certainly political favoritism, and the incident is unmistakable as an example of the defeat of the best interests of the children in the

schools through political action in getting a teacher's job for a person unqualified to fill it.

Such an example, multiplied hundreds or even thousands of times and aggravated in many cases by attendant chicanery, bribery and political pressure, shows clearly enough the great issue between good and evil in the public management of schools. We may expect too much of public education; certainly we shall be disappointed in our expectations unless we can protect and improve the standard of quality in the appointment of teachers. Compared with that, buildings and administrative machinery and intelligence tests, and even the curriculum, are of secondary importance. The public ought to be deeply concerned for quality in the teaching staff, as the chief factor in whatever value it receives in return for taxes spent on public schools. When a politician, on the school committee or outside of it, calls for preference in appointments for local residents or for men and women trained in local schools, let the public beware! The demand for local preference may rouse a widespread sympathy; it has been very generally advanced, especially since 1929; it is a plausible demand: but there is nothing in it or behind it except politics. Every League of Women Voters, every Parent-Teachers Association, every civic organization concerned with education, good government, or taxation, ought to watch for school appointments carried through under suspension of the rules. Appointments made regardless of the rules are made regardless of the children's good, which ought to be the sole consideration. Especially, all civic groups should know just how appointments to the schools are made and should insist on publication of the lists

which show the education and professional training of the appointees.

## II

But how can any one be sure that the record of graduation from institutions tells anything significant about a candidate for office in the schools? May it not be that the superintendent of schools in the case I have cited knew that the teacher in question was a born teacher, full of enthusiasm, devotion, sympathy for children, intuition of their needs and all the other qualities of personality demanded with such emphasis by orators on education? Lord Bryce in his *Studies in Contemporary Biography*, writing of Edward Bowen, one of the great masters of Harrow, says: "Teaching was in his view a special gift of the individual, which depended on the aptitude for getting hold of the pupil's mind, and enlisting his interest in the subject. He had accordingly no faith in the doctrine that teaching is a science which can be systematically studied, or an art in which the apprentice ought to be systematically trained." Perhaps teachers should be chosen by those who know a good teacher when they see him, no matter where he went to college, or where he got his training for the job, or whether he held many degrees or none. Perhaps—in an isolated instance—but exceptions made in procedures of importance to the public interest, exceptions intended to cover the unusual case, may be the open door through which may come the deep damnation of betrayal of the public trust. The argument that personality counts more than training reads sweetly to the superintendent who is willing to play politics.

But quite aside from that, the argument in fact breaks down. Every teacher in the schools needs more than person-



ality—much more; and what he needs besides he can not get, unless he is a genius, without recourse to colleges and training schools. He needs knowledge—not superficial knowledge, but knowledge organized, extended, vital and self-active. Graduation from a college may not be a perfect guarantee of the possession of such knowledge, but it is the best guarantee we can require; and the better the college the surer the safeguard on this thrice-important point. Every teacher needs also an understanding of educational problems, ideas, principles and policies, a professional attitude and competence in his judgment on professional issues, general and technical. He should be capable of participating intelligently in the continual discussion, conflict of opinion and practical compromise by which schools are slowly reorganized in their curricula and procedures to meet new needs and new conditions. Otherwise, the teachers (with notable exceptions, doubtless, such as Edward Bowen, though he seems to me, on just this point, himself to have been narrow in his outlook) are not unlikely to remain only bewildered routine workers, without any professional power to guide the public or even to educate their pupils while they teach them the conventional subjects in the conventional ways. Such power is not guaranteed by a degree in education, but that, again, is the best guarantee we have; and as with colleges, so with departments or schools of education, the better the institution, the surer the guarantee.

It may be that graduation from a college, followed by graduation from an institution for the training of teachers, deadens the personality and stultifies the artist in the teacher. William James once argued convincingly against the

“Ph.D. Octopus,” which seemed to him to bleed away the vigor of young aspirants for posts as college teachers. I should be the last to contend that colleges and university schools of education are not in need of a breaking-up of their routines, a broadening of their outlook and an infusion of courage and vision which would shake them from their reliance on getting jobs for their graduates as the best justification for their existence. Nevertheless, the fact remains that a young man or woman who has graduated from a good college and then from a good school of education, or from a good teachers college, is much more likely to have the scholarship and the professional power desirable in a teacher than one who can not present such institutional qualifications. I speak, of course, in general and of averages. The colleges and training schools do graduate poor sticks; but on the whole their product is our best reliance. A graduate of these institutions has at least shown personal qualities in the mere making of his record which should not be ignored. He may not be a rebellious artist; but he has persevered, and he has shown some power to learn and to think and to express himself. And every reputable institution for the training of teachers does in fact test its candidates also for their personal fitness to teach.

Granted that we need better education and better professional preparation for teachers, the best way to get it is to insist that every teacher in the schools shall be a graduate of the good institutions we now have and that the best of these shall be fully and increasingly represented in the yearly lists of appointments. If there were not an ample supply of candidates for posts as teachers, the case might be different. But

now there are plenty of well trained, well educated young men and women who are eager for appointment in the public schools. It is a buyer's market. This is the time to raise standards; and if parents and citizens really want good teachers, they have a simple, objective criterion on which they may rely—graduation from the best existing institutions for the professional preparation of school workers. The State teachers colleges and the university departments and schools of education are the first line of defense against political interference with the efficiency of the schools.

In expressing this conviction, I have purposely avoided nice distinctions among the institutions which take part in the preparation of teachers and controversial questions as to the necessary aspects of that important business. There are those who would insist that graduation from a college of liberal arts, without any study of education, is sufficient preparation for any type or grade of teaching. Argument as to the value of specific instruction or training in the techniques and conceptions of pedagogy is beside my point. Let the school authorities set their standards at any reasonable level or in any generally accepted terms: the point is that under such requirements as exist the public has the opportunity to detect favoritism and political influence by examining carefully the institutional record of those who are appointed.

Boston now requires the Master's degree as a prerequisite for appointment to teach in the high schools of the city; but in spite of much valiant effort on the part of the administrative officers of the Boston city schools it has been difficult to prevent advantage to those who hold the Master's degree from the

Teachers College of the City of Boston. There are plenty of cities which give a fixed preference to local candidates. There are plenty whose lists would reveal such an advantage, even if it is not made a part of the regulations under which appointments are made. One can hear the argument in support of that position: "Give the local boy or girl the best chance for a job! Keep the money paid in taxes for education within the city! Our institutions for the training of teachers are second to none!" But those who are genuinely concerned to have good schools will detect the hollowness of all such talk and will insist that no institution or group of institutions be given an advantage in the competition for posts, that no candidate be debarred whose institutional record meets or exceeds the requirements, no matter where he was prepared, and that the many institutions whose standing may be readily ascertained to be superior and whose graduates are actually available are well represented on the lists.

Of course there are plenty of difficulties to be faced in making appointments that will fulfil these conditions. I am not proposing an administrative scheme for selecting teachers. I am suggesting a standard by which the public may judge the results of all such schemes and thus fight the influence of politics in the appointment of teachers. If political influence is forced back into the colleges, universities and teachers colleges, and has to pursue its corrupting activity there, it will have a much harder task. By insisting on institutional standards—as these are recognized by associations of the institutions themselves—the schools may long be saved from the degradation of political interference.



## III

Obviously, there are other aspects to this problem, and the analysis must be pressed further if it is to reach to causes or to permanent remedies. When political influence in the schools is clearly vicious, the forces working for good are arrayed against greed, brutality and criminal motives of various kinds. But there is wide-spread political influence upon the schools which is not of the racketeering, gangster type. In a syndicated newspaper story I clipped this summer, the hero promises to help in obtaining a school job for the sister of the girl he vainly loves, and in order to do so he calls at once on an influential politician. The latter can not promise a full-time job but he agrees to "see some of the boys down at the hall" and is confident that they will "give her a break" the day school opens in the fall. The hero remarks that she is "a fine girl" and will make "a great teacher." The popular conception of teaching reflected by this bit of newspaper fiction is clear, and it does not involve gangsterism.

The idea that a position as teacher in the public schools is a "break"—a chance to earn a living at work which any respectable person, any "fine girl," can do—a job in the sense in which running an elevator is a job—at best a fairly simple custodial performance, a shepherding of "kids," with a certain amount of instructional activity done under the direction of supervisors—this is the root of all evil in the public conduct and control of education. Unless teaching is made, kept and popularly understood to be professional work of considerable difficulty, complexity and importance, dependent for its adequate accomplishment on technical competence and social understanding at least somewhat be-

yond the capacity of the average person, we shall never oust politics from the schools. This does not imply that teaching should be made, by some pedagogical *tour de force* achieved in normal schools, a mysterious undertaking. It is in its nature and essence, without pretense or forcing, all that I have said it should be: this is a social fact that can be discovered by any one who studies the actual working of the schools. The great task is to make the whole people realize effectively, even if vaguely, that a teacher, like a judge or a priest, is an expert on whose proper discharge of his duties the maintenance and advancement of civilized life in part depends.

There are certain curious backgrounds for the cheap political conception of teaching. One of them is the attitude of a certain class of people—mostly rich and mostly snobbish, all at least "conservative" if not in every sense reactionary—toward public education. They tend to regard the public schools as necessary but expensive charities. The theory that education is essentially a collective activity, a necessary function of the State, with the corollary that the private school—and of course equally the parochial school—is but an exceptional institution, to be accepted, even welcomed, for its usefulness as a variant, but never allowed to interfere with the development of the public system, seems to many people shockingly socialistic. Indeed it is socialistic; but it is the American theory, for which educational leaders since the enactment in 1647 of the famous "Old Deluder Law" in the Massachusetts Bay Colony have consistently fought and toward which our entire educational development has moved. In Newburyport, in 1790, the town established schools for girls, in spite of the opposition of the

conservatives, voting down a motion that all who attended them "should be denominated recipients of charity." In 1818 Boston made primary schools part of the public school system, despite the report of a distinguished committee (Harrison Gray Otis, Peter Fisher and others) who opposed the move because the town was already under heavy expense for education, the presence of a few illiterates could not be viewed as a serious matter and the few children who could not afford the modest fees charged for the instruction of ABCdarians in the dame schools could easily be cared for by charitable disbursements! It took the lives and labors of Horace Mann, Henry Barnard and a score of other leaders to establish the conception of education as an essential collective responsibility.

There will always be those who will fight the extension of the public schools in any direction whatever—either upward on the age-scale, or outward to include new functions and activities. Every parent who sends his children to a private school tends at once to be alienated from any vital interest in the public schools; and this is the only serious evil attendant upon the continuance of private institutions. There is in the American theory of education something basically antagonistic to pure individualism, whether "rugged" or simply feudal. If those to whom our present economic system grants the indubitable advantages of private schooling for their children sincerely desire to prevent the deepening and hardening of class distinctions, and if they wish to make education serve that purpose, they will work conscientiously in two directions—toward improving the public schools, even to the ultimate point of making private schools unnecessary;

and toward the constant stimulation of public spirit in the pupils in the private schools themselves. Samuel Gompers once said publicly that if the leaders of capitalism had wanted to prevent the rise of labor, they ought never to have allowed the public schools to exist. One way to use education as a means for the prevention of a communistic revolution which would destroy democratic institutions is to knit public and private education together, making private institutions the eager and modest servants of the common good. Perhaps that is an impossible ideal; but it has not been impossible in the universities, and in the schools it ought not to be beyond the power of the essential friendliness and civic interest of the typical American, even when he has made money enough to patronize our private "seminaries" or when he does so from religious motives.

A second obstacle to the wiping out of the political misconception of education is the attitude of teachers themselves, as expressed in their efforts to obtain the enactment of laws which will protect them in their jobs and which will make the schools a happy hunting ground for the "deserving." State and national associations of teachers are not guiltless in this connection. Even university departments for the training of teachers help to perpetuate the political attitude, when they make it too easy for teachers to get degrees, push them enthusiastically and without much discrimination for appointments, and thus insure their own continuance as self-supporting divisions of the universities. There is a sort of racketeering even among teachers and those who prepare them for their public labors.

The leaders of the teachers of the State of New York have scornfully de-



cried the work of an Advisory Committee on Education appointed by the New York State Economic Council, because that Committee adopts as a basic principle the view that public schools should be conducted with due regard to the financial resources of the community, even if teachers have to be dismissed. The Chairman of that Committee, Professor Frank E. Spaulding of Yale University, has rightly declared that more money, not less, should be spent on public education; but he has also declared, for the Committee, that there is waste in the expenditure of taxes on the schools and that in a time of depression such waste is especially to be deplored; and he has pointed out how tenure laws, which protect teachers in their jobs irrespective of their efficiency, are a prolific source of such waste. New York teachers have currently urged at Albany the Jacobi Bill opening night-school jobs to the unemployed in preference to teachers already holding day-school posts. Dr. Harold G. Campbell, superintendent of the New York City schools, opposes the bill because it will lower the quality of teaching in the night schools. These are examples of issues on which teachers' organizations are on the political side.

If the teachers of America are sincere in their professional purpose they will not seek to create new jobs for themselves or protect themselves, against the interests of the community, in the jobs they hold. They will not direct the work and influence of their organizations mainly to the securing of salary, tenure and pension laws or laws granting teachers special privileges and advantages. They will work on the problem of taxation, in order that public funds for education may be provided on a broader, fairer and more productive

basis. They will not act as if public money were a sort of ransom from the predatory rich, collected by the school board in the rôle of modern Robin Hood. They will accept the principle of Dr. Spaulding's committee, that the good of the children comes before the creation or continuance of jobs for teachers. The public schools will inevitably keep on expanding; but the leaders of teachers' organizations must devote themselves unequivocally to making public education better—qualitatively more satisfactory from every point of view, not quantitatively a still more blessed opportunity for new positions.

The fact that membership on a school committee is usually elective is another support for the political attitude toward education. Even when membership on a board of education is appointive, it easily becomes a political opportunity. The politicians have discovered the committeeman's job as well as the teacher's. They want control of the school board as a means of control over patronage and they want it also because the getting of it is a testing-ground for political strength and the having of it a sounding-board for political ballyhoo and a spring-board for political advancement. I once met a member of a local school committee at the barber shop and in the chummy atmosphere of that leveling institution I asked this educational authority why he kept the committee from getting down to business and wasted their time by raising false issues on which he could make political speeches. His reply was simply, "Aw, Professor!" He took it for granted that I understood his ambitions and realized the necessities of his case. And of course I did. He now holds an important State office to which he was elected by a safe majority.

It took over two hundred years to establish the school committee as a body representing the people and exercising lay control, through professional executives and advisers, over the schools of the community. As an institution of democracy the school committee may have inestimable value in keeping alive the local interest in the schools and in fitting them to local needs and local resources. But recent developments show that the school committee may also be a millstone around the neck of education. Special interests may capture the school committee and politicians may make it their plaything. It tends also to tie education too closely to the local situation, obscuring the fact that the education of all children is also a concern of the State and of the nation. If school committees are to remain elective bodies, the mode, time and regulating conditions of election to school-committee membership should be changed to emphasize the fact that a school committee is the local agent of the State, discharging a function austere divorced from the fortunes of political parties and the political advancement of individuals.

#### IV

It remains true, of course, that in education as in every other human interest, good can not win against evil unless the majority of the people understand how the issue declares itself and where and when the battle must be fought. I believe most people would take sides for the good, if they knew what the difference really was. It is time for leaders in education to turn again to the broader public problems in their field.

Civic groups should watch the workings of the machinery by which teachers are appointed to positions in the

public schools; and the class which George William Curtis once optimistically described as "the wealthy and refined" should take a new and earnest interest in "our public seminaries." If the depression continues or if we are really facing social reconstruction along radical lines, the wealthy and refined may discover that the public seminaries are unexpectedly important to their welfare. Teachers, in their professional organizations, should insist on the highest standards of education and professional training for the filling of their own ranks. If teachers want an index of their progress toward the true standing of a profession, they might find it in the extent to which their associations are entrusted, as in medicine and the law, with the formulation and safeguarding of standards for entrance into practice. The more they turn to unionism, in its ordinary form, the more difficult do they make their approach to professional status. State departments of education, finally, should have such relations to local school committees that the influence of the State may be stronger and more direct in the selection of the members who are to serve and in the character of their service. Although the suggestion is novel and possibly very wide of the mark, it might be advantageous (at least in certain States) to have the power to appoint a certain proportion of every local school committee—less than a majority—vested in the State Commissioner of Education.

In the deeper sense of the word politics, the sense in which Aristotle wrote and in which political theory has become a university discipline, education is simply a part of politics. But the political influence which endangers our schools does not derive from Aristotle or from universities.



# What Shall We Do About Japan?

BY H. B. MURKLAND

*Three possible answers to the naval challenge of Japan, which is daily becoming a more serious threat to world peace*

IT is fairly evident by now that the world's overly ambitious attempt at general disarmament has collapsed. A tremendous problem under the best of circumstances, the present state of Europe has made it an insoluble one. But this is not quite so true of naval disarmament. For various technical and political reasons limitation of naval armaments is somewhat easier to achieve, as is demonstrated by the fact that there are actually treaties in effect limiting the world's navies.

In 1936 these treaties will expire, which means that in 1935 something must be done about replacing them. In spite of previous progress the general disarmament debacle has been so complete that it is likely to involve the naval treaties also. So nearly impossible does it appear to renew these treaties in any recognizable form that there is strong sentiment in favor of not holding a naval conference at all. The effect on world psychology of abandoning the conference, or of holding an abortive one, would be so serious that it is important to explore every possible avenue which offers a way out of the impasse.

It is obvious that accomplishment can come only from an entirely fresh ap-

proach. To start anew in this way demands a reconsideration of the whole problem of sea power. It is not enough to know the present situation. We must place that situation against its proper historical background.

The history of sea power has been, since the days of the world's first navies, a history of dual conflicts. One power has held the seas against successive challenges until there arose a rival strong enough to destroy her. Never, until our day, has the command of the seas changed hands without a decisive naval war.

In modern times Great Britain has been the dominant power, forced to hold that position by her geographical situation and by the fact of her far-flung empire. Her supremacy was attacked in turn by Spain, Holland and France; from each conflict she emerged victorious. At the beginning of the present century a new challenge arose in the form of an embryonic German navy. In the Great War England crushed this newest threat to her power before it could reach full strength. She was successful in sweeping Germany's warships from the sea, but in that very process she raised up another rival, the most formidable that she had ever faced.

For a hundred years before the War the United States had had a small navy, never more than half the size of Britain's, and had felt no need for more. The two oceans were our best naval defense and, committed to our historic policy of isolation from the affairs of Europe, we saw no reason why we should maintain a powerful navy to protect our theoretically neutral commerce. We depended also on the sanctity of the idea of the freedom of the seas for neutrals, a doctrine which the rest of the world professed to honor. The naval phases of the Great War opened our eyes. Constant disputes with both England and Germany taught us that in the modern, interdependent world we could not keep clear of European entanglements, and that under the stress of necessity a nation able to do so will scrap the freedom of the seas along with all the other hampering rules which are supposed to govern international intercourse. We were faced with two alternatives: we could abandon our insistence on the right of our citizens to deal unmolested with all the warring nations and let England establish clearly her dominance over the seas, or we could follow the historic examples of Spain, Holland, France and Germany and challenge that position. It has always been the weaker power which holds to freedom of the seas; the great naval wars of history have arisen from efforts to assert that theory in the face of the stronger power which demands supremacy.

President Wilson decided to adopt the second of the alternatives. In his 1916 naval programme he advocated "incomparably the most adequate navy in the world" both to defend our long coast line and our foreign commerce

"against any possible adversary" and to preserve the freedom of the seas. These objectives should, logically, have brought us into conflict with England rather than Germany for the British interfered with our commerce much more drastically than did their enemies, but Germany, with the blundering stupidity characteristic of her imperial rulers, attacked us in a peculiarly unpleasant way, so that at last we found ourselves ranged at England's side rather than against her.

Our entry into the War in 1917, which made our navy for a time the ally of the British fleet, changed somewhat the direction of our programme but did not lessen its scope, and when the War ended we continued our construction according to the original plans. The refusal of the Senate to accept the League of Nations only strengthened the arguments of those who saw in a great navy our sole safety. For the first three years after the War we built ships furiously, having at one time more than twice as many capital ships under construction as all the rest of the world together. It was our definitely expressed intention to build a fleet greater than that possessed by Britain. The British would never have submitted tamely to such a relegation to second place, and the inevitable result of the carrying out of our plans would have been a naval race which might conceivably have led to an Anglo-American war. England would have made a desperate effort to keep up with us, but our superior resources would have made such an effort hopeless in the long run.

The Washington Conference of 1921 was therefore a godsend to England. Secretary Hughes's startling proposals were perfectly timed and con-



ceived. They were presented in such a way that the other nations, willing or unwilling, were forced to accept them or confess their hypocrisy in proclaiming their devotion to the principle of disarmament. At the same time they saved England's face, a process as important to the Western world as it is to the Orient. Before the world Great Britain could gain credit for her acceptance of the United States as a naval equal, even though by doing so she was only accepting the inevitable. For home consumption it could be pointed out that while England sacrificed, in new tonnage, little more than the plans for two capital ships, the United States had given up fifteen only partly antiquated battle-ships and had in addition stopped construction on thirteen of the sixteen new capital ships authorized in 1919. None of these was yet in commission, but approximately half a billion dollars had already been spent on them. The Washington agreement applied only to capital ships. After the failure at Geneva it was finally, at the 1930 London Conference, extended to the other categories. So, by a combination of idealism and respect for hard facts, a threatened naval race between Great Britain and the United States was averted. For the first time in history command of the seas had shifted without the shedding of blood. Great Britain was no longer supreme, but shared her power equally with the United States.

There are no serious issues between the two countries and in most international matters their interests are the same. War between them is about the most unlikely conflict that can be imagined. Neither one suffers by their dual mastery of the seas, and both gain appreciably from it. The new order

seemed, in spite of minor complications, to work well, and, all other factors being equal, there appeared to be no reason why, when the treaties expired, they should not be renewed, perhaps with slight modifications. Unfortunately the other factors have not remained constant.

## II

The whole international atmosphere has, of course, become more tense in the intervening period. In the decade of the 'Twenties a real effort was being made to clear up the debris left by the War. Under the auspices of Briand and Stresemann the relations between France and Germany, on which the peace of Europe largely depends, were relatively friendly; the League of Nations was as yet untried; and general disarmament was being approached with considerable enthusiasm if little intelligence. Today, with Hitler in power in Germany, France and the Reich are again at swords' points; the League has proven impotent; and disarmament is for all practical purposes a dead issue. The faint post-War flickerings of internationalism have died down and the flames of political and economic nationalism are burning more fiercely than ever, fed by Fascist dictators and nourished by the depression.

These general international stresses would in themselves hamper disarmament, naval or otherwise; their effect has been intensified by the interjection into the situation of a new and more specific factor. That factor is of course Japan's appearance on the naval scene.

At the earlier conferences Japan accepted, however unwillingly, a position of naval inferiority in relation to England and America. She was hardly in a position either to challenge the world

by refusing to accept the American proposals, or to defy the combined might of these two powers; nor were her dreams of empire as fully developed then as now.

This does not mean that Japan's emergence as a first-rate naval power was not inevitable from the moment of her metamorphosis from a feudal state into a modern nation, for it was. It simply means that only now are both internal and external conditions favorable for such an emergence. Japan is forced to assert herself on the sea by her geographical position and her economic status, both of which are remarkably like those of England. She is an island kingdom, which means that all her lines of communication are by sea, at the mercy of any power with a stronger navy. She is primarily an industrial country, dependent on transportation by sea for her very food. Lastly, she is now, driven by economic necessity, engaged in building up an over-seas empire. The founding of the puppet-state Manchukuo is but the first step in that direction. There is every reason to believe that once her Manchurian position is consolidated she will attempt to extend further her hegemony on the Asiatic mainland.

Here then is the background for Japanese naval expansion. The naval party in the country has always been a strong one. Bitterly disappointed at the results of the Washington and London Conferences, they have been making every effort to gain control of government policy, and to a considerable extent they have succeeded. It is primarily their growing power which has forced the issue at this particular time.

The international relations of the country have worked for them as well as her internal situation. Japan proba-

bly never had any particular faith in the League of Nations, but she was at least a member and hence subject to the letter of internationalism if not imbued with its spirit. Now she has defiantly left the League and has in consequence been forced inevitably into a more or less defensive position in the face of the rest of the world. It is rather an exaggeration to call her an outlaw, but she is at least no longer an intimate member of the family of nations. This status is bound to force her back upon her own military and naval defenses which take the place of the instruments of security furnished by the League.

Her general position outside of the world's organization for peace is further complicated by specific disputes with various nations. Her relations with Russia are sometimes strained, sometimes relatively easy, but they will always be potentially troublesome as long as the two countries remain neighbors. However unfounded it may be, there is considerable distrust of the United States in Japan and the Japanese jingoes at least see in America a future enemy. Japan's current economic offensive is bound to stir up bad feeling, particularly in England. The establishment of Manchukuo and the attitude of the rest of the world toward this new state are a possible source of international friction, as is the Japanese refusal to give up her control of the mandated islands of the Pacific when she leaves the League finally.

In short, internal and external circumstances have conspired to arouse to activity the latent Japanese naval threat. So far the pattern is familiar. Political and economic pressure in Japan has forced the nation, for its very life, to challenge the ruling power on the sea.



If new factors had not entered into the international situation it would be easy to predict the future. Japan would build furiously, and England or the United States, whichever held the balance of sea power, would match ship for ship with her. War would come whenever either Japan or her rival decided that they had reached the peak of their naval strength. Another of the great naval wars of history would come, leaving at its end one of the combatants broken and swept forever from the sea, the other supreme and unchallenged. And the cycle would begin again.

### III

But the future will not follow this course, for there is present a factor which makes the present situation different from past ones. This is the fact that dominion over the seas is no longer held by one power alone but by two together. Naval parity between Great Britain and the United States once achieved will not be given up lightly; it is unlikely that it will be given up at all, no matter what happens to general naval disarmament. The two nations are not in complete agreement, but their differences are relatively minor in the face of their greater unity against the threat from the Far East. Japan, if she offers a challenge, will be challenging neither England nor the United States alone, but both together. This does not necessarily mean that in the event of a Japanese attack on one of them, either Britain or America would fly at once to the side of the victim, but it does mean that there is always that possibility. Their interests are close enough so that if a real show-down came it would probably become a question of West against East. Japan could probably not, in the long run, outbuild

either of her rivals, for they both have a considerable start on her, both are more stable internally and both have infinitely greater resources on which to draw. To challenge either one would be an act almost of desperation; to challenge the two of them working even casually together would be utter madness, to which even the inflamed imagination of the Japanese naval jingoists would hardly resort.

This is perhaps the most important single fact in the new naval situation, and one which must be kept in mind in considering the possible developments of the near future. It is no doubt unfortunate that the present pacts are not to be renewed. But realism would suggest that instead of bemoaning this fact and spending our energies in an attempt foredoomed to failure to reverse it, we concentrate on saving the essentials. For however pretty a structure, from the point of view of the advocate of disarmament, the present naval pacts may form, their main objective could be secured equally well in other ways.

The simplest way, of course, would be by a direct agreement between Britain and the United States. Such an agreement would not of necessity involve us in European entanglements, secret treaties or an old-style alliance. There is no need for anything like the high-sounding "*Pax Anglo-Americana*" which some writers have suggested. There need be no promise to fight or work together—all that is necessary is for these two naval giants to agree that they will maintain equal navies, no matter what the rest of the world does. Minor factors will complicate the problem of course, but the agreement could surely be made sufficiently elastic to cover such points as might arise. To seek ship for ship, man for man and gun

for gun parity is childish. The very concept of parity is based on the assumption that the navies of Great Britain and the United States are not going to fight each other. If we do not accept this assumption the whole idea of parity is meaningless, and if we do accept it we need not quibble about a few extra tons or an odd cruiser or so—we need only see that the navies remain at approximately the same size. Such parity might well be buttressed by some kind of consultative pact which would not commit the two nations to acting together, but would offer the basis for such common action if it became desirable.

This is the direct way of settling the naval problem; of meeting the Japanese challenge and of averting a new struggle for naval supremacy. Japan would not like it, of course. She would probably refuse to sign any agreement founded on it and would proceed to expand her navy to the utmost limit of her capacity. The world, however, could face such a development with equanimity. By pursuing such a course Japan would only bankrupt herself, and she would hardly dare, under such circumstances, to attempt to assert her power by force.

While this method would settle the direct problem, it would of course give rise to a most unfortunate state of international psychology. Japan might perforce accept it but it would create very bad feeling, of which the world has more than enough just now, and would simply postpone the final settlement to a more propitious time for Japan.

#### IV

The alternative, of course, is to find a solution which will permit the British

and American navies to maintain their superiority while saving the Japanese face and giving her defensive equality. She does not really need perfect parity with her rivals; her naval problems are much simpler than those of Great Britain and the United States. Her interest lies wholly in the Pacific, while the United States has the Atlantic to consider as well, and England has all the seven seas to patrol. What Japan needs is, for all practical purposes, a navy equal to any other in the Pacific. She recognizes this distinction herself. Her spokesmen refuse to consider the ratio system any longer, but they insist that they are not asking absolute parity with the others. What they demand is security, which means the ability to defend themselves on equal terms against any attack, which can only come in the Pacific.

This distinction between absolute equality and equal security gives a clue to the solution of the problem. To make the issue one between the Japanese, British and American navies is ridiculous. The actual issue is between the Japanese navy as a whole and the Pacific naval strength of England and America. Of course the distinction between the strength of either of these navies in the Pacific and their total strength is a very fine one, but no finer than many similar lines drawn in discussions of disarmament. It would seem not impossible to use it as the basis for a new approach to the whole naval question.

Such an approach would involve the creation of naval zones. There would probably be three main ones: the Atlantic, the Pacific and the Mediterranean Sea; with other smaller zones in which certain nations have specific interests, such as the Caribbean area for



the United States and the regions in which Great Britain has particular imperial interests. Each country would estimate the size of the naval force which she required in each zone, and the comparison would be between the forces in that zone and not the total naval strengths. Thus, while the United States might have a total navy twice as large as that of Japan, she might very well grant Japan equality or even a slight superiority in the Pacific; the same thing would apply to England. There would have to be agreement by treaty, of course, that each force would remain strictly within its own zone, whether in peace or war; that the United States, for instance, in the event of war with Japan would not send her Atlantic fleet to join her Pacific squadron. This seems at first glance ridiculous. It is hard to imagine the United States, for example, fighting a desperate war with Japan and keeping half her navy idle on the Atlantic coast. But is it actually any less impractical than any kind of disarmament agreement? Such naval agreements would be analogous to undertakings not to resort to bacteriological or gas warfare, or to the bombing of civilians, to all of which many nations are willing to agree. The naval pacts, like all disarmament measures, would depend for their success on a regard for the sanctity of treaties. However cynical may be our attitude, we must accept this assumption. Otherwise to talk about any kind or degree of disarmament is simply a waste of breath.

In any case the actual value of any sort of disarmament agreement lies not in the degree to which it controls warfare, but in its usefulness as a preserver of the peace. We have learned from

bitter experience that desperate nations are not likely to be too scrupulous about treaties. Whatever agreements may be made as to the use of armaments, they are likely to be violated when war comes. Nevertheless, they are useful, for by reducing international tensions, stopping the arms races which so often lead to war and in general stabilizing existing conditions, they make the coming of war less likely.

It is in this way that the proposed zonal system of naval arms limitation would be useful. Once war comes, no pacts are likely to be of much avail, but if we can stop the incipient naval race in a way that will be generally satisfactory to all the nations concerned we will have done a great deal to avert a new naval war. And in warfare, as in other fields, an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

There are, then, three possible solutions of the naval dilemma. Great Britain and the United States might grant parity to Japan. This they will never do, for the simple reason that theoretical parity would give Japan actual superiority in the Pacific, since her navy would be concentrated there, while they must cover other fronts as well. Secondly, all attempts at agreement might be dropped, the United States and England might retain parity with each other and form a working agreement, then defy Japan to outbuild the combination. The result of this policy would be bad feeling, a ship-building race and ultimate war. The first of these alternatives is impossible, the second undesirable. There remains only some such compromise as has been outlined above. Only thus can we break the vicious circle and avert a new and disastrous episode in the story of sea-power.

# Washington as a Boom Town

BY OLIVER MCKEE, JR.

*The New Deal has brought to the capital, along with a horde of new politicians, prosperity and a carefree gaiety very different from the past*

WHEN President McKinley, in 1898, asked Congress to declare war against Spain, 28,000 regulars awaited the mobilization flash of the War Department. An army even larger than this has reinforced the Federal jobholders in Washington since Franklin Delano Roosevelt hoisted the New Deal banner over the White House. But the march to the capital has been too quiet and unobtrusive and there has been too little of the spectacular about it to win much of a play in the public prints. Had the New Deal paraded its battalions down Pennsylvania Avenue in martial array and with the blare of bands, had the newsreel photographers stood at the curb with their cameras, the maneuver would have been revealed in its real magnitude, and before this a modern Xenophon might have received his inspiration to pen the story of the Anabasis of Jim Farley's Thousands. But the figures speak eloquently enough. By November, 1934, Federal employes in Washington totalled 93,000, an expansion of approximately 30,000 since Herbert C. Hoover boarded his train for Palo Alto. Pledged in its campaign promises to a twenty-five per cent reduction in government

expenditures, the Roosevelt Administration, in less than two years, has increased Federal employes in Washington by close to fifty per cent.

The New Deal has made the capital a boom town. A bonanza prosperity sets its population apart from those of other American cities, with their mortgage foreclosures, wages and salaries cut in half, insecurity of jobs and the other items on the current litany of distress. Not only has a full army corps been added to the Federal payroll—the economic mainstay of the District of Columbia, which will bring into the city an estimated \$240,000,000 in 1935—but government employes, whose pay was cut but fifteen per cent while national income descended precipitately from over \$80,000,000,000 in 1929 to less than \$40,000,000,000 in 1933, were given back ten per cent of this last summer, and their friends in Congress are now fighting hard for the remaining five per cent before July first—the date when President Roosevelt has promised full restoration. If the easy money and the fat payrolls of Washington are those of a boom town, so too is the care-free spirit, the mood of adventure, the exhilaration of exciting living which the



humblest office-holders share with the Brain Trust as co-workers in the great experimental laboratory set up in their city.

Thanks to Postmaster General Farley's insistence that the victors be given the spoils, Washington has become the promised land for Roosevelt Democrats. Beyond the fact that they have been spared the full impact of the depression, old-line government employes have little reason to give the New Deal more than a Bronx cheer. The number of Federal employes appointed under the Civil Service rules has shown practically no net increase, and few have been advanced to the blue ribbon posts. The economy drive earlier in the Roosevelt Administration—engineered by Lewis Douglas, one of the real forgotten men of our day—separated from the government service a good many efficient and faithful employes. Political appointees have taken some of their places. They staff most of the emergency agencies, and they have strong delegations in the regular departments and bureaus.

According to competent authority, the salaries paid to the political appointees, on the average, exceed those paid for corresponding work to those appointed under the merit system. Many of the higher-ups in the NRA draw a good deal more—some of them twice as much—than the \$6,000 a year which Hugh S. Johnson, original boss of the Blue Eagle, set initially as his compensation. Salaries in the higher brackets are plentiful not only in the NRA but in the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, the Home Owners Loan Corporation and many other alphabetical units. The salary list may explain in part the enormous pressure for jobs, for business no longer has at its disposal the

lucrative posts that were so plentiful a few years ago. Washington still offers fine pasture land for place-hunters.

To New Dealers well placed in Washington, life offers some of its choicest gifts. Power is theirs and the glamour that goes with public place. They work and play in a community embarked on a great adventure in ideas. For those who enjoy being in the public eye, there are interviews with newspaper men, and out-of-town speeches and lectures. For those who like social life, Washington offers a full round of gaiety—a social life not as formal as it was under the Republican patricians, but a good deal more exciting. Mr. and Mrs. Roosevelt strike the prevailing key. Gone are the formality and stiffness that in recent years have marked the entertainments at the White House. Instead we find informal parties, dances for the newspaper "boys" and "girls," and the "widows" of the Gridiron Club—almost the open house of a large family. The same informality and friendliness extend down the line, with the result that new additions to the New Deal circle find themselves quickly at home.

The "big shots" in capital society of today are Brain Trusters like Richberg and Tugwell, administrators like Ickes, Moffett and Hopkins, and Cabinet officers. Hostesses regard Democratic Senators and Representatives as lesser game, for Congress is still a New Deal rubber stamp and must pay the price. Old-line bureau chiefs, government scientists and the like have a rating somewhat lower, just as civil service employes must yield precedence to the political appointees. Republicans are so few in number this winter that they are beginning to excite curiosity—the curiosity that attaches to museum pieces.

Henry L. Stimson spends some of his time in Washington, the one man in the Hoover Administration who has contrived to remain in the good graces of its successor. Andrew W. Mellon slips into town occasionally, as do Ogden Mills and a few others. The handsome Pat Hurley, former Secretary of War, prefers Washington, even under enemy control, to his native heath in Oklahoma. Republican Senators and Representatives are accorded the amenities which a visiting football team receives, and the same amenities have been given to Henry P. Fletcher, of old a Beau Brummel at the State Department and now Chairman of the Republican National Committee, who fires his popguns at the New Deal almost within a stone's throw of the White House.

## II

The impact of the New Deal on Washington has done more than create a fermentation of ideas. It has had important physical effects as well. A serious housing shortage is one of these. People in the medium income group find it increasingly difficult to rent a decent house or apartment within their means. No harder job than house-hunting faces the new arrivals who did not have the prevision to dig in after the inaugural parade. Those with the equivalent of a comfortable government salary in other cities usually obtain good value for the housing fourth or fifth of their domestic budgets. Mortgage foreclosures, cut or omitted dividends and slashed salaries fill the real estate market elsewhere with good bargains for those with cash in hand. The reverse holds in the capital—high prices and few vacancies. After a careful search of current offerings, enterprising reporters for the local papers tell us that there are

practically no rented quarters to be had. Even political pull avails the house-hunter little. Though rents have not yet been boosted to the pre-depression level, this may come before the year is over, in obedience to the law of supply and demand. You can't add 50,000 or more persons, almost overnight, to a city as small as Washington, and provide them all with decent shelter. The Federal authorities constructed emergency branches to house some of the government workers who came to Washington during the World War boom. If the Federal army continues to expand, housing regimentation may again be necessary.

The repeal of Prohibition and the huge additions to the population of Washington after many lean years, have again brought cheer to the hotels of Washington. The tourist trade continues to fill sight-seeing places with rubbernecks, but business men, to a greater extent than ever before, swell the throngs that daily detrain at the Union Station. Government control over business brings representatives of industry to the capital, in large numbers, to attend NRA code hearings or to become acquainted with other New Deal units.

All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy—even if he is a Brain Truster or one of his understudies. There was a time not so long ago, and within the memory of many Washingtonians not yet old, when one of the fashionable diversions in the summer was to take the trolley out to Chevy Chase. The street cars still run, but Washington, New Deal style, requires something more exciting for diversion. Night clubs have taken the capital by storm. The city has had for several decades one or two places where tired government



officials, clerks and their ladies could dance and drink during the hours when the night shift at the government printing office was rushing through the presses the speeches on Capitol Hill for publication in next day's Congressional Record. Though Washington society occasionally took a look at the bright lights in these resorts, most of its members preferred the entertainments in private homes. Conventional parties are still numerous, but they are facing stiff competition from the many night clubs that have followed the New Deal to town. These resorts number among their patrons diplomats, high officials, minor government employes and many others. Cocktail hours at the principal hotels make their bid also for the cash of the spenders. Both hotels and night clubs have floor shows, and their casts of "Broadway" stars. Liquor flows freely, but not more freely perhaps than in a New York or Chicago night club. The spirit of Washington after dark, as in the bright light of day, is that of a boom town; happy in its mood, easy in its spending, careless as to what the morrow has in store. For if the New Deal will not provide for those who sit behind its typewriters, and look after its own, for whom, pray, will it provide?

Thanks to Mr. Roosevelt's monetary policies, which have taken the United States off the gold standard, the foreign diplomatic corps sit again in clover and their money once more buys the best that Washington can offer. Diplomats contribute to the gaiety of the capital under the New Deal, and they find time withal to prepare full reports for their home governments on the economic and social experiments of the Roosevelt Administration. Washington is a city of a little over half a million. A quarter of these are colored, and small pay govern-

ment clerks and tradespeople make up the bulk of the remainder. Resident society, high government officials and the New Deal hierarchy, Senators and Congressmen and a few others—these, the people who really "count," a few thousands in number—reside almost exclusively in a small area in the northwest section of the city. Into this small group have been deposited over fifty ambassadors and ministers and their staffs, together with the whole showy apparatus of diplomacy. A town famous for its hospitality, Washington under the New Deal continues to open its homes, if not its hearts, to the diplomatic corps in its midst, with the result that they occupy a place in its social and official life which is theirs in no other major capital in the world. London, Paris, Berlin and Rome are industrial and cultural, as well as political capitals of Great Britain, France, Germany and Italy, but Washington has only two important industries—real estate, and government and politics. Its foreign diplomats are in the public eye at all times. Ambassador Bingham can lose himself for a few hours in the crowds on Regent Street, and Ambassador Straus can do the same on the Paris boulevards. Saito and Lindsay, Luther and Rosso and their colleagues are not so fortunate. For they must remain on the Washington stage throughout the whole performance each day. In the village press of the American capital, the social doings of the diplomats are chronicled in minutiae each day, even their appearances at the night clubs. In London or Paris, diplomats live under no such compulsion of publicity. Washington hostesses will wrangle for hours over the seating of a diplomatic subaltern, who would be a nonentity in Madrid, Vienna or Brussels. With their large entertainment

allowances, the foreign diplomats are able, in the course of the year, to bring to their tables most of the men in the top bracket of American official life. A few Senators, notably William E. Borah, refuse to go out after dark, and Vice President Garner has broken the precedent which decrees that the second officer of the Republic shall be the Administration's representative at the mahoganies of the great. Most of the Washington higher-ups, however, not only accept the invitations of the foreign diplomats, but also invite them to parties of their own. Since the demise of Prohibition, diplomatic liquor is no longer quite the drawing card that it was. But contacts between the foreign diplomats and the New Deal remain fairly close, and it is through the social interchanges and the after dinner confidences that chiefs of mission obtain much of the material which they use in giving their home governments the "low down" on Mr. Roosevelt and what he and his Brain Trust are doing.

### III

How land a Federal job at Santa Claus's G. H. Q.? The demand far exceeds the supply. This is clear from the long waiting list of eligibles who have passed the Civil Service examinations, and the huge stacks of applications on file in the offices of Senators and Representatives. Yet 30,000 or more men and women now drawing government pay cheques in Washington twice a month have turned the trick, so it can be done, just as it is possible for those who know the ropes to land a couple of orchestra seats though the ticket window carries the sign "house sold out." Patronage distribution is in the hands of Postmaster General Farley, but neither he nor his chief lieutenant at the National

Committee, Emil Hurja, have time to investigate personally the merits of each applicant. If you have a drag with a Senator, Congressman, or a national committee man, in the good graces of the Roosevelt patronage chiefs, his endorsement will go far toward landing for you a better paid job than anything you could get by winning top-notch marks in the competitive examinations of the Civil Service. Petticoat influence may at times tip the scales, particularly in commending to the good graces of the appointing authority some youngster from way back home. Provided the aspirant knows a public man of influence, the chances for a place on the Federal payroll in Washington are thus a good deal better than would appear on the surface. For New Dealers are like members of a large fraternity. Once tapped for membership, you obtain the privileges of the club, including government billets for a few of your friends.

The New Deal boom has not only added a fair-sized city to the government-supported population in Washington, but it has substantially increased other groups whose work closely ties in with the operations of the Federal Government. Newspaper and other writers, for example, were never more numerous in the capital than they are today—with the possible exception of the World War period. The three great press associations, the Associated Press, the Universal Service and the United Press, have their reporters stationed at nearly every street corner. The metropolitan journals maintain large bureaus, and smaller papers one, two, or three special correspondents of their own. The Press Gallery in Congress extends privileges to about 500 correspondents, and there are others who do not appear on the list. Magazine and special writ-



ers, and reporters for business news services, which aim to give their clients an "inside" picture of the confused and kaleidoscopic panorama in Washington, swell the list, and in addition editors and men on special assignment come to town for a few weeks, to add to the output of the regulars.

Lobbyists are almost as old as the Federal Government itself. The New Deal may not have brought with it any new lobbying technique, but it has brought to Washington on permanent assignment representatives of hundreds of business, industrial and other enterprises. Practically every business in the country has some kind of Washington representation today, and many trade associations have set up their headquarters here. Lobbyists and legislative representatives hold an important place in the life of the city. Hand-picked, and well paid, they put on a good front and mix freely in official and semi-official society. Among the new organizations, the American Liberty League holds a place well to the fore. Though not demobilized, the Prohibition lobby gets little attention. The war veterans continue to be well represented. The large number of organizations represented in Washington bears witness to the importance which various groups attach to the legislative and other actions of the Washington government. The spenders and propagandists seem to fill the best seats in the house. Except for the National Economy League, the taxpayer continues to remain pretty much out of the picture.

#### IV

Appropriately enough, the era which sees the greatest peacetime expansion of Federal activities coincides with the completion of the most ambitious pub-

lic buildings programme ever launched since L'Enfant, the Frenchman, laid out the plans for the national capital. The New Deal can take credit for all the alphabetical agencies, but it can not do so for the new buildings whose splendor so strongly impresses visitors to the city. It was the Republican Administration of the pre-depression golden age that conceived the plan for most of the fine buildings that now house the Federal bureaucracy. Mr. Hoover started off with his \$17,500,000 Department of Commerce—the temple of fact-finding. The Democrats, then out of power, were annoyed at the magnificence of this building, where the experts worked who contributed so many of the figures used by Mr. Hoover, as President, in his economic prophecies and his political speeches. But other buildings now rival, if they do not eclipse in magnificence, the Commerce building, part of which is used by the NRA and its large staff.

When Mr. Roosevelt returned from Warm Springs on December 5, he moved into his new executive offices—commensurate in their size and in their appointments with the advance in executive authority registered since he became President. Postmaster General Farley and Attorney General Cummings direct the affairs of their respective departments from new and palatial office buildings. Other recent additions include an Archives building, Interstate Commerce Commission, Labor, new House Office buildings and many others. Construction of these units has brought millions of dollars into Washington.

Notwithstanding the big Federal payroll and increased population, the capital nevertheless has a real relief problem on its hands. A special survey made by the *Washington News*, showed

that one out of every seven of the population is on the dole, or 72,000 in all. A partial explanation may lie in the fact that seventy-six per cent of those on relief are colored. Washington is easily accessible to most of the South, and thousands of Southern Negroes have come to the city in the hope that Uncle Sam would provide them with a present-day equivalent of "forty dollars and a mule." The New Deal largess and the Santa Claus distribution of money and care have been heralded far and wide. Whatever the achievements of the New Deal have been, there can be little question that it has encouraged millions to look on the Federal Government as a universal provider. So the capital, as the point of origin for the distribution of the New Deal billions, has exercised a potent appeal to the foot-loose and the nomads. Additional thousands have journeyed to the city in the hope of landing Federal jobs. Those without sufficient political pull to land a government billet have been added to the city's unemployed. Panhandlers are as bold here as they are in any city in the country; even outside the gates of the White House they ply their trade.

The large relief population in Washington has brought with it a serious health problem. Medical and hospital facilities have been inadequate, even though hundreds of millions of dollars have been available for the public building programme. Visitors to Washington—those who stop at the best hotels, make the rounds of the night clubs and have entry to the entertainments of high officials and diplomats—rarely see what lies behind the façade of outer brilliance, the unemployment, the doles and the development under the shadow of the Capitol of a large class of persons who have a deep and growing convic-

tion that the government will everlastingly take care of them.

A city more beautiful in its external features year by year, Washington has become the focal point for a centralization of governmental authority that goes far beyond anything the country has previously seen. That centralization made boom conditions inevitable. For when government attempts a big job, whether it be conducting a war or fighting a depression by priming the pump, a vast expansion in its organization always follows. Red tape, official rules and regulations, checks and counter-checks, these are all part and parcel of the machinery of government. Bureaucracy is something more than the men and women who sit behind the desks, write out the orders and perform the paper work; like Boston, it is a state of mind. The New Deal bureaucracy runs true to form. Invested by Congress, on the basis of the popular mandates of 1932 and 1934, with enormous authority over the affairs of the individual, and entrusted with the spending of vast sums of money, the New Dealers have become firmly entrenched in Washington. Power has an infectious quality that feeds on itself, and New Dealers will naturally want to keep their bureaucrats in the seats of power. Up to now there has been virtually no check or audit of the New Deal and its works, and now that the Republican opposition in Congress has been reduced to negligible proportions, a real audit is likely to be deferred for at least another two years. Washington, there can be no doubt, will remain a boom town as long as the New Deal remains, and for those who man the guns it will continue to offer not only good pay but thrills and romance aplenty, and life in the grand manner.



# THE LITERARY LANDSCAPE



THE most striking addition to the list of fiction for 1934 that has been published since the last Landscape was written is Franz Werfel's *The Forty Days of Musa Dagh* (Viking, \$3), a novel of 832 pages which a great many people will be reading well into the New Year, if general critical approval means what it should.

It is the work of a German author of note, another of the exiles from the rule of the Nazis. A number of his novels have been published in this country and some have had fair success, although not anything like what they deserved. The Landscaper wrote with great enthusiasm of one in particular, *Verdi, the Romance of the Opera*, a fascinating story with a fine air of nobility about it, which is still very much worth looking up, particularly if you have any especial interest in music.

The present novel, however, has a much wider appeal than anything else Herr Werfel has given us, for two sound reasons: first because it is a magnificent adventure story, and second because it deals with the grave problems of nationalism and of racial minorities. Basically it is the story of the resistance of 5,000 Armenian villagers to the Turks during the terrible days

by

HERSCHEL BRICKELL



of the World War, when efforts were renewed to wipe out the Armenians.

Musa Dagh is a mountain in Syria, the Mount of Moses, and upon its steep slopes takes place most of the action of the book; the Armenians, under the leadership of one of their number who had been an officer in

the Turkish army and who had returned home after marrying a French wife and living the life of a cosmopolitan, decided that since they were doomed anyway, they might as well sell their lives as dearly as possible.

The odds were overwhelmingly against them, but the terrain was theirs, and not all the troops sent against them were as full of enthusiasm as they might have been, so the battle was fought on somewhat even terms, a combination of guerilla warfare with the use of scientific tactics and strategy that makes irresistible reading, and can not but involve the emotions of any one who admires courage or who is interested in what happens to people under stress.

## *The Story Ends Happily*

The conclusion of the desperate resistance was relief by a French squadron, with the removal of the survivors, and the prospect that they would be able to start life again, a small nucleus

of a nation that it seems impossible to kill. But the leader, Bagradian, whose son has lost his life, and whose wife has proved unfaithful to him, is not among the rescued; he is the symbol of heroic devotion who, having done his work, dies.

This bare skeleton of Herr Werfel's long and skilfully written book may be enough to indicate its interest as a story, but there is a great deal more to it. Some reviewers have suggested that it is really the story of the Jews in Germany under Nazi persecution, and there is little doubt that the author did have in mind the plight of his own people, but he does not labor his symbolism, and neither is his book an example of special pleading. It is a rich piece of work, filled with the essence of humanity, and it is written both in its emotion and in its detail as if the author had been a part of what he writes about. It is, too, reasonably historical. There is very little doubt of its high rank among recent novels, and the Landscaper recommends it without bothering about making reservations.

The other novels of the last few weeks of the year, or novels that escaped the Landscaper's attention earlier in the season during the peak of the flood, which deserve attention include two from Maine, a State that is in the midst of a small literary upheaval, having suddenly become articulate and threatening to run away with the American show. Rumbles of this eruption were heard when Gladys Hasty Carroll's *As the Earth Turns* appeared in 1933 and when Kenneth Roberts began his fine series of historical novels, the latest of which is *Captain Caution*, and a first-rate story it is, too, as exciting as any one could wish and very well written.

### *Maine Seafaring Folk*

The two mentioned in the foregoing paragraph are Isabel Hopestill Carter's *Shipmates* (William Scott, \$2.50); and Elaine Myers's *Loaves and Fishes* (Henkle, \$2.50), both by new authors. The Carter novel is primarily the story of a lass who married a sailor and went to sea with him, bearing her children there and coming to anchor with them, a widow, when her husband loses his life. The author is herself of seafaring stock and spent her early days on her father's ships. She writes simply and unpretentiously, but in a most agreeable style, and her children are unusually attractive, as well as her loyal wife who didn't mind going around the Horn so long as she could be near her husband. The story has enough excitement in it; but it scores largely because of its homely quality, its fine simplicity, which fits the subject.

Miss Myers has written of coast people, like so many families in Maine practically amphibious, and her book is made up largely of the struggle of another faithful woman to keep her family together after the sea has taken her young husband. The style is much lusher and more romantic than that of Miss Carter's book, but there is genuine feeling in it and an obvious veracity of detail.

Two more recent Maine books mentioned here before, but both quite good enough to bear recalling, are Mary Ellen Chase's *Mary Peters* and Robert P. Tristram Coffin's *Lost Paradise*, both published by Macmillan. The first is about a girl born at sea who finally has to come ashore and take care of a family; the second, a poet's remembrance of two weeks of his boyhood on a coast farm. It will be interesting to see



how far this Maine movement goes; the people who are in it have genuine talent, and certainly the material is inexhaustible.

### *Tarkington's Boys*

And, too, there is Booth Tarkington's latest venture into the world of small boys, *Little Orvie* (Doubleday, Doran, \$2.50), which tells about a lad of seven, and which the Landscaper found about as hilariously entertaining as any book he has read in years. It may have a slightly Peck's-Bad-Boy air about it, but Orvard is a seven-year-old to the life, and subtly distinguished from the older Penrod. The newest hero is not really bad, he is just misunderstood; a visitor from another world who can't see the sense of what goes on around him and is therefore in constant conflict with it. The theme of the book is Orvie's passionate desire for a dog, which is completely and fully gratified in one of the happiest endings on record, for we leave the young man with an armful of puppies of various breeds. The Landscaper has discovered that not all the admirers of Penrod and Willie Baxter think so highly of Orvie as of the other two, but the first opinion stands: Mr. Tarkington has done another masterpiece in juvenile psychology. In *Boyd-Boy*, a spoiled brat of four who comes to call on Orvie, he has done a study of one of the most detestable young hellions in all literature; all fond parents of one boy-child ought to be forced to read it as a protection to the rest of us.

Other good books of fiction of recent publication include such diverse titles as P. L. Travers's *Mary Poppins* (Reynal and Hitchcock, \$1.50), a highly whimsical little tale about an amusing nursemaid that has swept England and which

seems likely to go a long way here despite its complete detachment from the contemporary scene—or maybe because of it; Honore Morrow's *Yonder Sails the Mayflower* (Morrow, \$2.50), a book about the troubles of the Pilgrim Fathers as they tried to get away from Old to New England, a human story and well done, as might be expected; Edward Newhouse's *You Can't Sleep Here* (Macaulay, \$2.50), a novel about a Hooverville which is supposed to be Communist propaganda, and which is proletarian fiction, but which has some excellent qualities if you don't mind the everyday language of the streets on the printed page; and Caroline Gordon's *Alex Maury, Sportsman* (Scribners, \$2.50), a character study of a Southerner that will linger long in the memory, a really lovely book and simply packed with the lore of wood and field. It offers further evidence of the striking talent that first made its public appearance in Miss Gordon's *Penhally*, one of the best of all the many Southern novels of recent years.

### *From "The Smart Set"*

Worthy of recommendation, too, is *The Smart Set Anthology* (Reynal and Hitchcock, \$3.50), a fat volume of selections from the old *Smart Set* during its best days, the days first of Willard Huntington Wright and later of George Jean Nathan and Henry L. Mencken. Burton Rascoe supplies a characteristically snappy and readable introduction, which is a history of the remarkable magazine, and he and Conklin Groff, who began work on the project some years ago and wound up with enough stuff for half a dozen volumes, made the choice of the material. It is a perfect bedside book for any one in the forties who can remember the

thrill of the *Smart Set's* sophistication, and there is a lot of stuff in it that does not have to rely upon any such extraneous help for its appeal.

### *Some Good Novels*

Before we say good-bye forever to what 1934 brought us in the way of fiction, the Landscaper offers the following list as the novels of the year that gave him the deepest and most lasting pleasure:

*Cloud Howe* by Lewis Grassic Gibbon, the sequel to which, *Grey Granite*, will be published shortly; *Breathe Upon These Slain* by Evelyn Scott; *Joseph and His Brothers* by Thomas Mann; *Lightship* by Archie Binns; *The Cold Journey* by Grace Zaring Stone; *So Red the Rose* by Stark Young; *Now in November* by Josephine Johnson; *The Proud Servant* by Margaret Irwin; *The Golden Vanity* by Isabel Paterson; *A Nest of Simple Folk* by Sean O'Faolain; *I, Claudius* by Robert Graves; *Lust for Life* by Irving Stone; *Mary Peters* by Mary Ellen Chase; and Victoria Lincoln's *February Hill*. Also, of course, Franz Werfel's *The Forty Days of Musa Dagh*. Search as you will, the name of Lewis Grassic Gibbon's *Cloud Howe* will not be found on any other list of best novels, but the Landscaper is not in any doubt at all of its superior merit; advance reports are that *Grey Granite* is as good, if not even a little bit better.

So long as we are on the subject of the author of *Cloud Howe*, it is probably just as well to pass on to another excellent book he has done under his real name, which is J. Leslie Mitchell. The book is called *Earth Conquerors: The Lives and Achievements of the Great Explorers* (Simon and Schuster, \$3.50), and is concerned with the fol-

lowing nine who have sought what Mr. Mitchell calls the Fortunate Isles: Leif Ericsson, Marco Polo, Columbus, Cabeza de Vaca, Magellan, Bering, Mungo Park, Richard Burton and Fridtjof Nansen. Their work is tied together with a perfectly excellent introduction and the sketches themselves are both well and freshly written.

This Mitchell-Gibbon is himself an explorer, a Scot, and therefore a natural-born wanderer, who is one of the greatest living authorities on the Maya civilization among other things. He is also an aviator, and all this has been accomplished at the tender age of thirty-one. If the gods are kind and he doesn't lose his life in some of his adventures, you will be hearing his name for a long time to come, both as a novelist and as a writer of first-rate books of non-fiction.

### *Bottom of the Sea*

Speaking of his book leads us quite naturally to other books of adventure, and there is nothing of this sort around that is any more exciting than William Beebe's *Half Mile Down* (Harcourt, Brace, \$5), which might have been subtitled *Adventures in a Bathysphere*. Last year Mr. Beebe and Otis Barton, inventor of the bathysphere, which is, as most people know from the newspapers and the newsreels, if not from the Chicago Fair, a superior type of diving bell, went down 3,028 feet off Bermuda, which was a matter of 2,500 feet deeper than the best previous dive in an armored suit. The book is an account of this dive and other dives, together with a great deal of scientific material, some handsome colored pictures, and a brief history of diving, including an account of Alexander's sojourn at the bottom of the sea in an



early bathysphere where on one occasion he saw a fish that took three days to swim past!

Mr. Beebe promises most nonchalantly that it will not be any time at all before helmet-diving, or even trips to the black night of the ocean depths, will be as commonplace as a ride in a bus and if he can make the promise good he will have opened up a new, strange and beautiful world for future generations to explore.

There is excitement and adventure, too, in Sir James Jeans's latest book, which is much more popular than his others whose difficulty has not however stopped large numbers of people from reading them. The new one is *Through Space and Time* (Macmillan, \$2.50), and after describing the carryings-on that have made drama of the life of our tiny planet, it plunges straight out into the universe. It is an exploding, or expanding, universe of which we are so infinitesimal a part that if we didn't stop to think that we could at least grasp the universe with our one-cylinder brains we really ought not to bother about continuing to breathe. Sir James writes extremely well, as is well known, and this is an invaluable book for those who have not had time to look into the recent findings of science concerning Man, the Earth and Space.

Russell Owen's *South of the Sun* (John Day, \$2.50) is another excellent book about exploration, although the real emphasis is upon the human side of the matter in this case. Mr. Owen devotes his attention to an account of how the men on the first Byrd expedition got along as a group cut off from all ordinary human contacts and forced into a society from which there was no escape. It is a fine study of social psychology and most attractively written.

### *Japan and the Future*

Of recent books about our own times and the problems that engage our attention when we are not occupied with more immediate and personal matters, the Landscaper's first choice would be Upton Close's *Challenge: Behind the Face of Japan* (Farrar and Rinehart, \$3), which explains Japan's attitude toward the rest of the world in simple language, gives a picture of the country and its leaders, and then ventures the prophecy that unless this country is willing to withdraw from the Pacific, it will inevitably have to fight the Japanese, perhaps as an ally of the Russians. The combination may sound a bit odd at first blush, but history is full of such things; the only tie that binds one nation to another at any time is self-interest.

Some students of the situation in the Far East still hope that Japan's imperialistic course will be checked by an internal explosion, but Mr. Close says this is nonsense and that in spite of a badly unbalanced budget and of some serious domestic difficulties, Japan is a strong nation well able to carry through the plans made by its ambitious masters.

On the face of it, Mr. Close's book may appear a sensational piece of journalism, but it should not be taken thus; it is the work of a man who knows the East, and whose writings in this case have a melodramatic air because the facts themselves are melodramatic. It is interesting to note that Mr. Close, writing several months ago, said Japan would demand naval parity, and would get it one way or another, which is one prophecy that has been fully borne out by events.

For those who are interested in the broader aspects of foreign relations,

Michael Demiashkevich has written an extraordinarily succinct and readable introduction to the whole question of the relations between nations in *Shackled Diplomacy* (Barnes and Noble, \$2.50), which is not only valuable as an historical sketch, but also as a help to understanding the workings of present-day chancelleries. It is not a pretty picture, this study of the diplomatic past, but in spite of it all the author thinks things are getting better, that the League of Nations is definitely useful and evolution continues. One of the appealing points of the book to the Landscaper is that its author, unlike the Marxists, knows that wars have many causes, and that the complete destruction of the capitalist system would not stop them unless a new set of people went with the changed world. This is a genuinely intelligent book, from which much is to be learned.

### *The Saar Situation*

At this writing it looks as if the threat to the peace of Europe contained in the Saar situation had passed, and this takes away, perhaps, from the importance of another of the topical volumes of recent publication, Michael Florinsky's *The Saar Struggle* (Macmillan, \$2), an excellent small book written from first-hand observation. But there is permanent value in what the author says of the actual workings of a League of Nations government and lessons to be learned from the observations, one of the first of which is that international commissions are never going to be popular as ruling bodies. People will stand any sort of abuse from their own kind rather than be bossed about by foreigners, no matter how good their intentions, and very little can be done about it.

Every one interested in foreign affairs—in contemporary history, would be better, perhaps—will find Quincy Howe's *World Diary* (McBride, \$3.50), not only of interest as a book to read through, but especially useful for reference. As editor of *The Living Age*, Mr. Howe regularly prepares digests of foreign correspondence and articles in foreign newspapers and is therefore *au courant* with whatever developments there are, and he has followed this method in the preparation of the *Diary*. It is possible to quarrel with his interpretations at times, but the material is valuable and well put together. There are also a great many excellent cartoons and caricatures that are worthy of preservation.

### *Our Own Miseries*

Of books about the world today that come much closer home in their interest, Norman Thomas's *Human Exploitation* (Stokes, \$2.75) is one of the best and most important. Mr. Thomas calls his method of investigating conditions in this country "test borings," and the material he brings up is shocking, although a good many of us know we have a long way to go before we can view our handiwork in America with any degree of complacency. Mr. Thomas is not talking about the depression, either, but about the great boom, when we were supposed to be the most prosperous nation on earth, and were, but with whole sections of our population left out of the distribution of imaginary profits.

Naturally if you asked Mr. Thomas what to do about it, he would answer with the Socialist formula, but his book is far more than a mere argument for a mild governmental swing toward the Left, with public ownership of pub-



lic utilities and so on; it is hard and factual and ought to be thoroughly discomforting to any one with a trace of social conscience.

It is all interesting, much of it offering consolation to those who fear that the home market for the products of our factories is in danger of early saturation—a million people in New York city without bathtubs, for example. There is a good deal of first hand investigation in it, and this applies to the sections relating to the plight of the Southern sharecropper, who has been the Forgotten Man so long he wouldn't understand any other rôle. What Mr. Thomas says on this subject is gospel, and while the Landscaper does not envy any one who sets out to rehabilitate the sharecropper, white or black, the work is there to be done. The standard of living among our sharecroppers is considerably below that of the average European peasant, as your reporter knows from first hand experience here and abroad; such people are of precious little use to a nation committed to mass production, if one cares to regard the problem from a coldly mercenary point of view.

### *Peru's Troubles*

Another of the recent books that deals with some of the same questions discussed by Mr. Thomas in quite another country from ours is Carleton Beals's *Fire on the Andes* (Lippincott, \$3), a most excellent book on Peru, with illustrations by a distinguished native artist, José Sabogal. This is the result of a long stay on the scene and also of a deep knowledge of the whole Latin American situation, a field Mr. Beals has made his own. Conditions are bad in Peru—of course, we didn't help any with those famous loans of ours—but

Mr. Beals is hopeful for a resurgence of the native culture, for which he has a great admiration. His book is filled with color and vigor and written as exciting history; as usual, his style is slapdash and his grammar reckless, but he has the true journalist's feeling for vividness, and he has something to say.

If an adopted New Yorker may assume that the rest of the country is also interested in this so-fascinating city, the Landscaper would like to recommend one of the best books of the season, Richard McKay's *South Street: A Maritime History* (Putnam, \$5), which is a story of the growth and development of this port written by a descendant of the McKay who designed clipper ships. It ought to appeal to any one who has ever loved a sailing ship; for the Landscaper it repeopled South Street, one of his favorite thoroughfares, anyway, with tall masts and pigtailed sailors; it is scholarly, thorough, well done and delightful.

### *Westchester's History*

Carrying this matter of local pride a step further, the remarkable county of Westchester that lies to the north of us, and over whose parkways we travel when we are trying to get out of town, has instituted a method of instructing its children in county matters that might well serve as a model the country over. Certainly not every county in America is a Westchester either for scenic beauty, historic interest, good government, or any of the other unusual attributes of our neighbor, but a plan which teaches children to know and to love the fragment of the earth they call home is bound to be beneficial.

The scheme was started by Gerard Swope several years ago, and has resulted in the publication of a number of

pamphlets, brought out by the Westchester County Publications Committee at White Plains. The specimens I have seen and read with keen interest—I have a great admiration for Westchester County because I frequently drive through it and looking at its beauties realize that it took work and planning and money to give the traveler so much loveliness—include *The Story of Present-Day Westchester County*, *The Story of the Geology of Westchester County*, and *Incidents from Westchester's History*. Mary S. Roeder wrote the first, Frances H. Smith the second and Helen L. Hultz the third.

They are interestingly written and would all serve as helpful guidebooks to any one passing through the county who wished to see its main points of interest. The first three pamphlets of the series are the work of teachers in the Scarsdale schools and there will be others. The Landscaper supposes, although this may be a presumption, since the suggestion is made without authority, that other parts of the country which are interested in this phase of Westchester's educational activities may obtain copies of the pamphlets. There is a splendid field in this teaching of local history; maybe not so many of us would have broken our necks to get away from home if somebody had just taken the trouble to tell us how much had happened where we lived and how many interesting things there were to see and do right outside our own front doors.

### *The Good Old Days*

One more book about New York, this time not so encouraging, because it is the political history of our town during the great boom. It is Milton Mackaye's *The Tin Box Parade* (McBride, \$2.50), a few chapters of which

appeared in *The New Yorker*, but the greater part of which is entirely new. As a reporter Mr. Mackaye dwelt in the midst of this mad spell, and he writes about it with great humor and insight. He is consistently hard-boiled and detached, but some of the glamour of the Jimmy Walker era slips past him, so that we are likely to say, "Yes, wasn't it just terrible," when we all know it was fun while it lasted. Mr. Mackaye is unmerciful on the subject of the New Tammany, and rightfully so, of course. Tammany will never be anything but Tammany, and all we need for another spree is just a little more loose change. *The Tin Box Parade* is one of the year's most entertaining books, charmingly cynical and amusing and still packed with facts from the records. It was an incredible era, and deserved just the treatment Mr. Mackaye has given it.

Of the books that remain to be discussed, two of entirely different kinds are outstanding, and would be outstanding in any season. One of these is Frank Swinnerton's *The Georgian Scene* (Farrar and Rinehart, \$3), a literary panorama by a man who has been in the midst of things in England throughout the period he covers, who writes charmingly, and who is a good critic besides. The result of this combination is a book any one who cares for the recent history of English literature can hardly afford to miss; it is both good reading and useful for reference.

### *Sense About Wines*

The other is the best book the Landscaper has come across on the question of wines, *The Complete Wine Book*, by Frank Schoonmaker and Tom Marvel (Simon and Schuster, \$2.50). It was suggested some time ago in this de-



partment that one of the best ways to solve the liquor question in this country would be to put in some first-class courses in the best schools designed to teach the students the proper respect for good things to drink. Maybe this won't be done, but if it is, the Schoonmaker-Marvel volume is the proper textbook; nobody need look any farther. It begins with a sensible argument in favor of wine-drinking and explains how existing laws are carefully arranged so as to favor hard liquor, and goes on to explain just about all anybody needs to know about wines, where they come from, how they are handled, how they are to be drunk, and when, and all this with an absolute minimum of bunk.

There is a lot of excellent propaganda for the wine trade, with which the Landscaper finds himself in entire sympathy—the current trend toward sherry in place of cocktails is one of the few hopeful signs of the times—and maybe if the book has a wide enough circulation we may be able to find what we want in wines at reasonable prices properly labeled. Messrs. Schoonmaker and Marvel deserve a cheer; they write like people who really appreciate the importance of good wine in the good life. . . .

### *Books for Musicians*

Two other recent books are of especial interest and importance to people who care about music. One is Charles O'Connell's *The Victor Book of the Symphony* (Simon and Schuster, \$3.50), a large and handsome volume with an introduction by Leopold Stokowski, and containing in addition to intelligent discussion of hundreds of symphonies and symphonic composi-

tions a large number of biographies of musicians. Those who recall the earlier editions of *The Victor Book of the Opera* will find the new volume something else altogether, much better done in every respect, and handsomely made up.

The other is *Composers of Today*, edited by David Ewen (H. W. Wilson, \$4.50), biographies of 200 composers, with extensive bibliographies, and so on. This book is one of a series of biographical books now being published by the Wilson Company and they are all of excellent quality.

Readers of *Your Money's Worth*, published at the outset of the organization of Consumers' Research, and of *100,000,000 Guinea Pigs*, another healthy blow at the dishonest advertising designed solely to lure the reluctant dollar from the pocket of the man who has worked for it and earned it, are certain to be interested in Mary C. Phillips's *Skin Deep* (Vanguard Press, \$2), which takes us for a journey through the magic country of cosmetics. Miss Phillips worked with Consumers' Research, and her findings knock the spots out of most of the claims of the people who make beauty aids; she is so skeptical she doesn't believe soap, for example, will do any more than keep the skin fairly clean, and sometimes widely advertised soaps will not only not remake the skin nearer to the heart's desire, but are downright harmful.

In the main, this is a book to cheer the heart of any one who has been disgusted by the charlatanism and the snobbery of the cosmetics makers; like *100,000,000 Guinea Pigs* it names names and it also crusades vigorously for a real Pure Food and Drugs Act.

Tros Tyriusque mibi nullo discrimine agetur

# The North American Review

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## Apéritif

### *A Worth-While Pogrom*

EXCITED by the heroic example of Adolph Hitler, some Americans would like to start a pogrom of their own. There are, of course, a good many more Jews in the United States than in Germany, and with the desire to find a scapegoat growing as depression continues, they stand out as an easy target, despite our tradition of liberty and tolerance.

Although the Jews themselves seem to be worried by this tendency, average Americans do not believe that it can ever amount to anything substantial. At any rate, there is no intention here of arguing the merits of the case: what is intended, on the contrary, is to suggest the possibility of another pogrom, directed at a different religion—one which is said to have nine times as many adherents over the world as Jewry. These are known as Animists, and though the *World Almanac* estimates that the whole of North America contains only 50,000 of them, it is probable that the figure is far too low because the calculators used too strict a definition. By allowing for recent developments the number could easily be ex-

panded to satisfyingly bloody proportions.

According to the *Encyclopedia*, Animism may be simply the "doctrine of spiritual beings, including human souls," or the "doctrine that a great part, if not the whole, of the inanimate kingdom, as well as all animated beings, are endowed with reason, intelligence and volition, identical with that of man." Primitive races were apt to attribute the same intelligence and spiritual life to animals or trees or stones as they themselves enjoyed; sometimes they even ascribed more of these qualities to non-humans than humans, but there is no use in quibbling over the amount. If the 50,000 Animists whom the *Almanac* places in North America were all Indians believing that sticks and stones had occult powers and human beings should preserve a discreet humility in a world thus better endowed spiritually than we commonly think it, there would be little sense in suggesting measures against them. Humility is a virtue rare enough as it is. But it seems to be more than possible that a new sort of Animist has risen, and not among the Red Men. Also, it seems to be more than possible that these new Animists



far outnumber the Red Men and are reproducing at such a rate that the pogrom must either come soon or destroy the majority of our people.

The New Animist does not as a rule indulge in incantations before a totem pole, nor does he consider, as do the natives of the island of Nias, that his own spiritual life is carried on by no less than four separate and distinct souls. But he does invest institutions with superhuman power and use words in as necromantic a manner as any sorcerer. The political governments which his forefathers set up as a necessary evil to function as little and efficiently as possible he now thinks of as having almost divine capabilities. Business organizations, on the other hand, which were never set up for any reason but to make a profit, he believes possess a number of benign souls representing the principles of Service and Idealism and many other worthy things. To these he offers New Animist prayers and incantations in the form of slogans. But the slogans, as is common in such cases, seem to have a good deal more effect on the devotee than on the spirit to whom they are offered.

The tariff, perhaps, is worth considering as an example of New Animist psychology. Set up to "protect infant industry," it did its job well and infant industry grew up to a lusty maturity. By then, however, the tariff had been invested with one soul called the Full Dinner Pail and another called Monopolistic Profits. To the first New Animists shouted praise in public like Holy Rollers. And to the second there was fully as enthusiastic obeisance in private, which sometimes was known by the technical name of Log-Rolling. All of this was very colorful and a great deal of fun for the New Animists, but it confused the

issue. At this moment our industry has advanced as far from infancy as any in the world, presumably, but the tariff—if not its two souls named above—has achieved immortality. An interesting speculation could be made on its place in the world after industry passed on through its currently protected senility into the Great Beyond. But, being invested with immortality, it can not of course be discussed as an economic instrument, beneficial or harmful, as the case might be, under specific circumstances.

In the political field instances of the New Animism are peculiarly frequent and odious. President Roosevelt started his term with the announcement that experiments in government were necessary and that he intended to try them, scrapping those which proved unsuccessful as soon as their failure was noted. His most famous experiment, of course, has been the NRA, and the opinion is now almost universal that it is a conspicuous failure, yet there is no indication that Mr. Roosevelt intends to scrap it. The reason, some say, can be found in one of the NRA's immortal souls, an immortal soul which is common to all political undertakings: namely, Reëlection to Office. Scrapping the NRA would also mean scrapping the employment of a couple of thousand place-holders, and place-holders are remarkably influential at election time, on one side of the ballot or the other, depending on whether their employment is scrapped or not.

The chief fault of New Animism, it can be seen, is that it tends to perpetuate institutions without regard for their utility. By setting up a belief that they possess immortal souls of no particular relevance to their practical uses, and intelligence quite apart from the intelli-

gence of those who run them, New Animism invests the institutions themselves with immortality and thereby interferes with change and progress. The fault is as apparent in economic and financial spheres as in the political. Because security of capital is the ultimate aim in investment and because land has always seemed to men the enduring symbol of security, mortgages came to have a special sanctity for investors. The New Animists made deep obeisance before this idol and produced mortgage bonds, the saga of which needs no repetition here. Because railroads once gained a similar animistic reverence the government for four or five years now has been pouring taxpayers' money into their depleting coffers as fast as the investors' ran out, though there seems to be no reason for believing that economic changes will ever again permit them to have the privileged position in our economic system that they once held.

The simple and platitudinous point to be made is that in any realistic view under a profit and loss system nothing can be a safe investment for long. But the New Animists are forever finding something that looks safe for a while and investing it with superhuman intelligence and an immortal soul. As a natural corollary, they resist with all the might of their slogan-incantations any change that seems to threaten the after-life of their security-symbols. It is a common belief that many startling and progressive inventions are withheld from use solely because vested interests have employed their wealth to prevent their products from being superseded by better ones. Yet the supersession finally happens in one way or another and it is always with surprise and reproach that the New Animists discover their economic idols crumbling without

a trace of immortal soul to be found anywhere about them.

If man is to be the supreme accomplishment of his environment it is a good idea to endow him with an immortal soul, for the realization of possessing such a soul furnishes him with courage to surmount difficulties. But if he is ever to establish control over that environment he must stop believing that its non-human constituents have immortal souls too, for these would always be too much for him.

It remains to identify the New Animists a little more closely for pogrom purposes. The Jews are a proud race and it has always been easy to find them when blood seemed to be needed, but the situation is different with New Animists. They also have pride, but it is more often a mistaken one. They like to think of themselves as the bulwark of the nation, the defenders of its traditions, the front fighters for progress and prosperity. It might not even be hard to find them among the anti-Semites. No doubt a group of monetary theorists would yield a fair-sized crop for the firing squad, since most people who evolve rigid systems for the solution of complicated problems endow the systems with supernatural qualities. Similarly, EPICs and Townsend Plans and share-the-wealth movements and many other patent social remedies should furnish their quota of victims.

In fact, probably the greatest difficulty of a New Animist pogrom would be to know when to stop before depopulating the nation. But if a few thousand New Animists were chosen from various walks of life and were dispatched with suitable brutality to join the curious array of departed spirits which they presently worship, it might prove a sufficient example to convert the millions of their



brethren. The conversion, of course, would be to a realistic attitude toward their environment, and since that seems to be the only remaining hope of civilization, such a pogrom deserves support.



### *Norris vs. Farley*

Senator Norris has introduced a bill intended to take the Postoffice Department out of politics, and particularly to stop the Postmaster General from being chairman of the Democratic National Committee. Under its provisions the Postmaster General would be appointed by the President for a ten-year term, subject to the Senate's approval. Local postmasters would be appointed by the Postmaster General, not by the President as the case is now. And none of these officials would be allowed to take part in any political campaign.

This is naturally aimed at poor Mr. Farley, whose multifarious activities have drawn down on his benign bald pate the wrath of many political purists and other good people. But while Senator Norris's motives are of the best, without a doubt, and while his bill might have at least the effect of placing a more reasonable limit on the number of new postage stamp issues and thus save honest philatelists from apoplexy, there is possibly room for doubt of its complete wisdom.

It would be a financial gain for the Federal Government to have a Postoffice Department which, like England's, was run efficiently as a business institution. This is one of the purposes of the Norris bill. But it has become a tradition of the United States to have the political manager of the party in power a member of the cabinet, and it is debatable whether the money which might be saved by the Postoffice Depart-

ment under a business régime would be worth while if it necessitated placing Farleys in the State Department or the Treasury or the Interior. In almost any other cabinet post the possibilities for harm are probably greater than in the Postoffice, which, after all, can hardly receive much attention from its head, considering his other duties.

Mr. Farley, as Secretary of State, would not lack in suavity, but it is reasonable to doubt his equipment for the higher politics of international relations. In the Treasury his favors would be appreciated no doubt, but his appointment might really start the grass growing in Wall Street. And so on down the line. In comparison with the vision of Mr. Farley in any of these other posts, it is a downright pleasure to think of him as Postmaster General, and Senator Norris might do better to let bad enough alone.



### *Keeping up with Government*

The Federal Housing Administration is a very busy organization, as any one knows who reads the newspapers. Mr. Moffett races around the country like a whirlwind, persuading people to build or repair houses as a measure to restore prosperity to the construction industry and thereby reduce the unemployment problem. He also spends a good part of his time in explaining the National Housing Act, under which his organization functions, and which was designed to give all reasonable encouragement to prospective builders.

Because the FHIA is such a busy organization it is only natural that its press releases should be numerous and full of words. They have, in fact, been so numerous and full of words that this department fell into the slovenly habit

of dropping them into a wastebasket without reading after a gross or two had accumulated. However, during a lull the other day a batch of these releases popped out from a pile of neglected matter and was opened out of tardy curiosity. In a speech by Mr. Moffett the words, "Read and study our bulletins and circulars," leaped from the page and shamed our dormant patriotism. Here, after all, was a tremendous, public-spirited undertaking, dedicated to the well-being of the nation, and we had been too lazy to follow its activities. Something should be done, and at once.

Releases numbered 189, 190, 192, 194, 195, 196 and 197 were included in the batch. Scores that had gone before were forever lost, but these at least we could read and study. Number 189, a speech by a Mr. C., drew first attention, and an able performance it was. Many of its points were well worth repetition and discussion, and we marked them so, mentally constructing half a dozen stimulating paragraphs concerning them for this department. Then, turning to Release Number 195, we learned that unforeseen circumstances had arisen and that the speech in Release Number 189 would never be delivered, which was a severe disappointment.

Next we turned to an address of Mr. Moffett's, Number 190, which, though more generalized and diplomatic, as a very high authority's should be, was also interesting and instructive, and fully deserved a few meaty paragraphs in this department. But Release Number 197 postponed the date of the ad-

dress and requested editors to guard against comment before the later date. The later date was to be before publication of this issue of the magazine, but a strict construction of the "guard" warning still prevented us from commenting on Mr. Moffett's material.

At this point our patriotism became dormant again and Releases 192, 194 and 196 landed without ceremony in the wastebasket. The FHA is a very busy organization and noble in motive, but our patriotism can not keep up with its publicity department quite so unflaggingly as the mimeographers—bless *their* busy souls.



### *A Small Point*

There was one point in the Hauptmann trial which must have disturbed all workers in the editorial trade who were able to note it in the crush of words which have come out of Flemington, New Jersey. This was the prosecution's reliance on a recurrent "ihgt" spelling to link the defendant with the ransom notes. When a compositor, proof-reader or manuscript worker saw the possible threat to life and limb of a simple transposition, which could happen many times in the course of his daily work, it necessarily added to the neurotic fears and wild complexes already a normal part of his job. With emotional instability at its present dangerous condition in the craft, it seems too bad that this new urge toward the booby-hatch had to be added.

W. A. D.



# Anything or Nothing

BY P. W. WILSON

*Who has discovered our real national game, as it appears in any guise from a variable dollar to a Townsend Plan*

A STRANGER from Europe who finds himself in the Land of the Free must expect that it will take him a year or two to become acclimatized. It is only after a kind of apprenticeship to the unusual that his faculty for astonishment is seasoned to transatlantic sensations and that he ceases to be surprised.

What impresses the spectator on the sidelines is that a popular game in this country is Anything or Nothing. It might almost be compared with football where there are long and solemn séances, known as huddles, during which even the slow-moving camera can detect no signs of life, followed by spasmodic endeavors to make up for lost time in which the climax of the play is a forward pass when the ball flies through the air with the greatest of ease, and everybody enjoys a thrill. Who gets the ball—whether the pass is “completed” or “intercepted” or merely an occasion for plastic surgery—these are questions that only arise later.

Many illustrations of this “play” might be given—some of them too delicate, almost, for discussion. For instance, there is the development of western civilization which is known

among the polite as the cocktail hour.

Every student of sociology knows that the benefits of liquor are also a problem. It is thus usual in most countries to regulate the liquor traffic and regulation is a patient, a thankless proceeding. For centuries, Great Britain has been trying to perfect and maintain some kind of regulation.

The United States therefore has saved herself from complications by declaring for all or none. First, there was Prohibition of alcoholic beverages. Now there seems to be a kind of Prohibition in some homes of beverages that are not alcoholic. The cocktail which used to be illegal, is treated as compulsory, and a guest is made uncomfortable who still marches in step with Bishop Cannon and Bernard Shaw in the Blue Riband Army. In cafeterias, consecrated hitherto to coffee, including the *Cafés des Enfants*, as the French call them, there are bars set up, without any restriction apparently as to hours of sale; and it is even said that high heels are entangled in the brass rail.

It is one thing to say that, in a democracy, every citizen should be fairly represented and that class-distinctions be abolished. But are we quite sure that

mass-demands may not also be an embarrassment to society?

One of the most amusing mysteries solved by Sherlock Holmes was known as the Red-Headed League. It was an association—a bogus association—of people with red hair. Suppose that some bright benefactor of society were to start a Red-Headed League in reality and were to insist that all of its qualified members were entitled to a bonus of \$2,000 apiece, due in 1944 but payable here and now on demand, together with a pension at sixty years of fifty dollars a week—what would be the result? Brunettes would be obliterated and even blondes would be radiant with what the hymn describes as “the roseate hues of early dawn.” Also, there would be the bills to pay.

A Red-Headed League is doubtless preposterous but why not organize a Red-Handed Lobby? If veterans win their bonus, why should not teachers come along and demand, not only salaries—which would be an unusual concession—but a commencement premium on every student graduating? Why should not doctors collect death benefits from the Treasury, and clergymen a funeral allowance from some alphabetical source of currency interested in reducing the number of the unemployed?

The most popular of these predatory piracies on the public purse would be an Empty-Headed League which all of us would be eligible to join. Such a League makes a more intimate appeal to the individual where the stomach also is empty, where the mind is worried over the future and where savings in the teapot have been exhausted. People thus impoverished are grateful for any kind of sustenance, even if it be no more than a diet of hot air. All that such a League needs is a Plan.

II

When first I heard of the Townsend Plan I was so stupid as to be little interested. Dr. F. E. Townsend, it seemed, had his residence at Long Beach, California and Long Beach is a long way off. California, so I had been given to understand, was the paradise of sunshine, not statistics; and what with the Mooney case, Luther Burbank’s spineless cactus, matrimonial complications at Hollywood, the EPIC of Upton Sinclair, picture brides from Japan and other earthquakes around San Francisco, I had neither time nor energy to fathom any more of these abstruse mysteries emanating from the Pacific seaboard.

I was thus annoyed when, despite myself, the Townsend Plan aroused a certain curiosity. I had been informed positively that the United States, having rebelled against King George III, is a country where the dollar is almighty. People of all persuasions would so far demean themselves as to run after dollars as if they really wanted to put them in their pockets. Yet somehow or other, this rugged individualism did not enter into the latest gospel from God’s own country.

Whatever else might be apparent in the Townsend Plan, it certainly suggested not only that the dollar is almighty but that it might be ubiquitous. Dollars would be on millions of doorsteps—cash on delivery by the postman. Yet how was the largesse received? I was amazed by the indifference of the nation to the allurements of filthy lucre.

There are the usual petitions in favor of the Plan. Yet I was told that only 25,000,000—this out of a total population of 130,000,000—had signed on the dotted line. There are rumors of illiter-



acy and everybody having the mentality of a boy of fourteen. But surely with all the schools and colleges working overtime on vocational emoluments, people should have been able at least to make some kind of a fingerprint in return for a prospect of fifty dollars a week when the time comes.

Then it occurred to me that 25,000,000 signatures—if that is the number—or even 10,000,000 signatures, make a somewhat formidable requisition. These people who sign can also vote, and Carlyle, who was a little capricious in his admiration for democracy, used to discourse upon a “Parliament speaking through reporters to Buncombe and twenty-seven millions, mostly fools.” I wondered what Carlyle, with his caustic tongue in an ill-shaven cheek, would have said about Congress and California and all the expectant who happen to be in the fifties, sixties and seventies.

There are people who think that the Townsend Plan is too insidious even for discussion. When, however, I examined it, I discovered that it was just another of those cases where Anything is offered as an alternative to Nothing. For most people in this country there have been no pensions at all. Hence the view of Dr. Townsend that a suitable pension would be \$200 a month. The novelty of the Townsend Plan is not its essence. That is old stuff. It is the exaggeration of the essential.

Thirty-five years ago, “Joe” Chamberlain was a Dr. Townsend who promised pensions to the British and the promise helped to win what was called the Khaki Election over the South African War. Twenty-five years ago, Asquith as Dr. Townsend fulfilled what Liberals in their discourteous way held to be Chamberlain’s broken

pledge. These pensions have been paid ever since and are being paid at this very moment. President Roosevelt as Dr. Townsend proposes that such pensions shall be paid henceforth in the United States. Dr. Townsend is thus merely guilty of plagiarizing his plagiarists.

Dr. Townsend thinks that old age pensions should be spent and not saved. He is quite right. But is it necessary to put that into a statute? Experience has shown that in the rarest instances do old age pensioners lay by money. Why should they? Without any compulsion, we may assume that what the state gives will be used without delay for the usual domestic purposes.

If legal safeguards have to be considered at all, let them be directed against real dangers, and particularly the possibility that recipients may be induced to pledge their pensions to sharks and swindlers preying upon the ignorance and credulity of the aged and infirm. Such a pledge of a pension should be made null and void.

Again, it is quite right that pensions should be spent in the country where they are granted. But why legislate on the point? In ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, the pensioner would spend his money anyway on Main Street and the adjacent gas-stations. But in the hundredth case, there might be a special reason, let us say, for living with a married son or daughter in Canada. Why deny the old fellow a pension on that account?

The clause debarring the pensioner from remunerative work also seems to be superfluous. In the regular occupations, he would have to be employed at the standard rate of wages and we may take it that, in nine cases out of ten, such regular employment would cease. But

suppose that a pensioner is given some light job which makes him feel that he is still of some use in the world, is that to be made a crime? Take a super-annuated statesman! Why should he not write his reminiscences? And so with a truck-driver. If he put in a few hours gardening, what harm is there in that?

The Townsend Plan is thus what, in newspapers, is called a back-number—save for one slight typographical error. A pension of \$200 a month is proposed when clearly a pension of twenty dollars a month—double the British pension—must have been intended. Nor is the slip of the pen—herewith happened—entirely negligible. Some people are taking the cypher seriously, and may be inclined to ask why it has been so thoughtlessly omitted from President Roosevelt's proposals. Why does not he provide fifty dollars a week? While, therefore, I can not pretend to rival Dr. Townsend as a player with billions on the bagatelle board, I may offer a comment or two on how the policy of Anything or Nothing works out in this particular case.

### III

Most of us try to keep young. But here is an argument for old age. It is the strongest argument ever presented to mankind since Cicero wrote his famous essay *De Senectute* which has been such a perennial joy to youth studying Latin. As Rabbi Ben Ezra in his declining years might have written to Dr. Townsend—"perfect I call thy Plan—thanks that I was a man"—particularly a man over sixty—and that I fancy will be the ejaculation of many a Negro in his cabin down South when he and his astonished wife—browsing over their Browning—receive a settled

income of approximately \$5,000 a year—to be spent at once and to be spent as they like. Even the "poor white trash" will be encouraged to make the best of whatever of life is left to them.

Here and there, we may be invited to a celebration of birthdays, inadvertently overlooked during the decades before this latest of New Deals. When Britain adopted pensions, it was discovered that, in Ireland, the census had been somewhat neglected, especially during the hungry 'Forties when pensioners were born. There was thus an admirable boom in unsuspected longevity, and in the United States, it may be that, among millions of immigrants from a redistributed Europe where wreckage is more evident than records, a similar phenomenon will arise the cost of which would run into many millions.

Anything or Nothing as a philosophy seems to be affecting the minds of the inflationists. The Townsend Plan—so they are told—will cost \$19,000,000,000 a year. Hence, these dollars will have to be cheap dollars, and we may expect a glorious rise in prices. It will cost two dollars to have one's hair cut and five dollars for a meal.

The truth is, of course, that the Plan is not an emergency measure to be financed by loan or the issue of currency. The whole cost of the Plan must be raised by taxation of some kind, and this means that taxes or levies that in effect are taxes must be quadrupled. The Plan does not mean that there will be more dollars in circulation or that the dollars will be of less value. It means that some will get dollars which others will have to pay.

All of us agree that there should be a reasonable provision for the aged. But is not this a case where, with fatal fa-



cility, reason may be subordinated to the philosophy of Anything or Nothing?

The total national income of the United States used to run around eighty billion dollars. During the depression, it fell to a much lower figure and may now be put at about fifty billion. The cost of the Plan would be, therefore, thirty-eight per cent or about two-fifths of the national income as now estimated. It would be an operation unprecedented in sheer magnitude by any economic revolution outside Russia.

If the national income is fifty billions, it follows that the average income in this country per head of population is \$400 a year. Hence, a Townsend Pensioner would enjoy six times as much money as the average person receives today. However incomes were adjusted as a result of the Plan, the pensioner would still be several times better off than he and his friends had been during their productive years. To exact such tribute for the aged from the young would be an imposition, nor is it certain that life should be made to consist of a looking forward to a period of leisure so lavishly endowed. If fifty dollars a week can be paid to a retired man of over sixty, whose children probably are grown, more than twenty-five dollars a week should be paid to the wage-earner whose children still have to be supported.

One criticism of the Plan seems to me to be beside the mark. It is suggested that here is another case of trying to obtain prosperity by shortage. Multiply dollars. Remove 8,000,000 people of sixty years of age and over from the ranks of the producers, there will then be more of everything for everybody.

It is true that any scheme of old age pensions at sixty will affect 8,000,000

to 10,000,000 people. But these pensioners will include millions of people—for instance wives—who have not been working and, in many cases, can not any longer work for wages. The number of vacancies created would be much smaller than 8,000,000 and they would be vacancies filled up at once by younger persons at present seeking normal employment. To eliminate the too young and the too old from industry is a sound way of reducing unemployment and if there is anything at all in the theories of the technocrats, production can be expanded at any time to meet the utmost demands of the consumer. As every merchant knows, there is seldom a difficulty in having goods to sell. The difficulty is to find people to buy them.

The Townsend Plan will be regarded by many as moribund. President Roosevelt's programme—so it will be argued—has killed it with kindness. But the philosophy of Anything or Nothing of which it is an illustration, continues to be a danger to social policy as a whole. Think of what would be the result if Dr. Townsend arranged benefits, not only for old age, but for maternity, sickness, the crippled child and widowhood. At every point in such a huge scheme, the essential may be exaggerated.

As a policy, Anything or Nothing reads excellently in headlines. It is like cutting off a leg to cure a broken toe—the patient can understand, however simple-minded he be, just what is going on. The trouble is thus with civilization. It is not and never has been Anything or Nothing. Civilization is a mechanism of life exquisitely adjusted to environment and such a mechanism can only run smoothly if the balance-wheel is in good order.

IV

Civilization includes factors that will never be other than international, and the difficulty here is that the United States is sometimes inclined to overestimate the mentality of Europe, which is always a mistake.

The best minds in the Old World can deal with Anything that comes along. Also, they seem sometimes to be able to deal with Nothing. But they do find it difficult to deal with Anything that may prove to be Nothing and with Nothing that may prove to be Anything. What is neither one thing nor the other but either or both, is a little elusive.

The World Court is, of course, merely a mausoleum of international law. Still as a lethal chamber for unwelcome quarrels, it may have its uses, and when the Court was proposed by the United States, when Andrew Carnegie, though a Scot, paid for the palace, Europe did believe that this country favored the rule of law not men. It did not occur to the chancelleries that advocacy of the World Court was really a new kind of secret diplomacy intended

to camouflage a policy of isolation in which, once more, the essential was exaggerated.

So with the dollar. The world can adjust itself to sixty-cent gold. It can readjust itself to one hundred-cent gold. But the tables of the money-changers in the Temple are, it must be confessed, turned somewhat topsyturvy when the dollar may be worth either sixty cents or one hundred cents. It is a new kind of Anything or Nothing.

The Old Lady of Threadneedle Street, so greatly admired by David Lloyd George, is quite ready, if need be, to turn to thought-reading. But the guessing competition must not be too Einsteinian. It is not easy even for the Bank of England to pick out the ninth judge of the Supreme Court and afterwards say precisely what is in his mind. And what is to happen if President Roosevelt, like King George V, threatens—as it were—to create peers? How is a banker in Paris to prognosticate a decision by a tribunal, however august, which may still be itself indeterminate and, in any event, is empowered to do Anything or Nothing?





# The White Quail

BY JOHN STEINBECK

## *A Story*

THE wall opposite the fireplace in the living room was a big dormer window stretching from the cushioned window seats almost to the ceiling—small diamond panes set in lead. From the window, preferably if you were sitting on the window seat, you could look across the garden and up the hill. There was a stretch of shady lawn under the garden oaks—around each oak there was a circle of carefully tended earth in which grew cinerarias, big ones with loads of flowers so heavy they bent the stems over, and ranging in color from scarlet to ultramarine. At the edge of the lawn, a line of fuchsias grew like little symbolic trees. In front of the fuchsias lay a shallow garden pool, the coping flush with the lawn for a very good reason.

Right at the edge of the garden, the hill started up, wild with cascara bushes and poison oak, with dry grass and live oak, very wild. If you didn't go around to the front of the house you couldn't tell it was on the very edge of the town.

Mary Teller, Mrs. Harry E. Teller, that is, knew the window and the garden were Right and she had a very good reason for knowing. Hadn't she picked out the place where the house and the garden would be years ago? Hadn't she seen the house and the gar-

den a thousand times while the place was still a dry flat against the shoulder of a hill? For that matter, hadn't she, during five years, looked at every attentive man and wondered whether he and that garden would go together? She didn't think so much, "Would this man like such a garden?" but, "Would the garden like such a man?" For the garden was herself, and after all she had to marry some one she liked.

When she met Harry Teller, the garden seemed to like him. It may have surprised him a little when, after he had proposed and was waiting sulkily for his answer as men do, Mary broke into a description of a big dormer window and a garden with a lawn and oak trees and cinerarias and then a wild hill.

He said, "Of course," rather perfunctorily.

Mary asked, "Do you think it's silly?"

He was waiting a little sullenly. "Of course not."

And then she remembered that he had proposed to her, and she accepted him, and let him kiss her. She said, "There will be a little cement pool flush with the lawn. Do you know why? Well, there are more birds on that hill than you'd ever think, yellowhammers

and wild canaries and red-wing black-birds, and of course sparrows and lin-nets, and lots of quail. Of course they'll be coming down to drink there, won't they?"

She was very pretty. He wanted to kiss her over and over, and she let him. "And fuchsias," she said. "Don't forget fuchsias. They're like little tropical Christmas trees. We'll have to have the lawn raked every day to keep the oak leaves up clear."

He laughed at her. "You're a funny little bug. The lot isn't bought, and the house isn't built, and the garden isn't planted; and already you're worrying about oak leaves on the lawn. You're so pretty. You make me kind of—hungry."

That startled her a little. A little expression of annoyance crossed her face. But nevertheless she let him kiss her again, and then sent him home and went to her room, where she had a little blue writing desk and on it a copy book to write things in. She took up a pen, of which the handle was a peacock feather, and she wrote, "Mary Teller" over and over again. Once or twice she wrote, "Mrs. Harry E. Teller."

## II

The lot was bought and the house was built, and they were married. Mary drew a careful plan of the garden, and when the workmen were putting it in she didn't leave them alone for a moment. She knew to an inch where everything should be. And she drew the shape of the shallow pool for the cement workers, a kind of heart-shaped pool with no point at the bottom, with gradually sloping edges so the birds could drink easily.

Harry watched her with admiration. "Who could tell that such a pretty girl

could have so much efficiency," he said.

That pleased her, too; and she was very happy, so that she said, "You can plant some of the things you like in the garden, if you want."

"No, Mary, I like too much to see your own mind coming out in the garden. You do it all your own way."

She loved him for that; but after all, it was her garden. She had invented it, and willed it, and she had worked out the colors too, so carefully. It really wouldn't have been nice if, for instance, Harry had wanted some flowers that didn't go with the garden.

At last the green lawn was up, and the cinerarias around the oak trees bloomed in sunken pots. The little fuchsia trees had been moved in so carefully that not a leaf wilted.

The window seats behind the dormer windows were piled with cushions covered with bright, fadeless fabrics, for the sun shone in that window a good part of the day.

Mary waited until it was all done, all finished exactly as her mind had seen it; and then one evening when Harry came home from the office, she led him to the window seat. "You see," she said softly. "There it is, just the way I wanted it."

"It's beautiful," said Harry, "very beautiful."

"In a way I'm sad that it's done," she said. "But mostly I'm glad. We won't ever change it, will we, Harry? If a bush dies, we'll put another one just like it in the same place."

"Curious little bug," he said.

"Well, you see I've thought about it so long that it's part of me. If anything should be changed it would be like part of me being torn out."

He put out his hand to touch her, and then withdrew it. "I love you so



much," he said, and then paused. "But I'm afraid of you, too."

She smiled quietly. "You? Afraid of me? What's there about me you can be afraid of?"

"Well, you're kind of untouchable. There's an inscrutability about you. Probably you don't even know it yourself. You're kind of like your own garden—fixed, and just so. I'm afraid to move around. I might disturb some of your plants."

Mary was pleased. "Dear," she said. "You let me do it. You made it my garden. Yes, you are dear." And she let him kiss her.

### III

He was proud of her when people came in to dinner. She was so pretty, so cool and perfect. Her bowls of flowers were exquisite, and she talked about the garden modestly, hesitantly, almost as though she were talking about herself. Sometimes she took her guests into the garden. She pointed to a fuchsia tree. "I didn't know whether he would succeed," she said, just as though the plant were a person. "He ate a lot of plant food before he decided to come around." She smiled quietly to herself.

She was delightful when she worked in the garden. She wore a bright print dress, quite long in the skirt, and sleeveless. Somewhere she had found an old-fashioned sun-bonnet. She wore good sturdy gloves to protect her hands. Harry liked to watch her going about with a bag and a big spoon, putting plant food about the roots of her flowers. He liked it, too, when they went out at night to kill slugs and snails. Mary held the flashlight while Harry did the actual killing, crushing the slugs and snails into oozy, bubbling masses. He knew it must be a disgusting busi-

ness to her, but the light never wavered. "Brave girl," he thought. "She has a sturdiness in back of that fragile beauty." She made the hunts exciting, too. "There's a big one, creeping and creeping," she would say. "He's after that big bloom. Kill him! Kill him quickly!" They came into the house after the hunts laughing happily.

Mary was worried about the birds. "They don't come down to drink," she complained. "Not many of them. I wonder what's keeping them away."

"Maybe they aren't used to it yet. They'll come later. Maybe there's a cat around."

Her face flushed and she breathed deeply. Her pretty lips tightened away from her teeth. "If there's a cat, I'll put out poisoned fish," she cried. "I won't have a cat after my birds!"

Harry had to soothe her. "I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll buy an air gun. Then if a cat comes, we can shoot it, and it won't kill the cat, but it'll hurt, and the cat won't come back."

"Yes," she said more calmly. "That might be better."

The living-room was very pleasant at night. The fire burned up in a sheet of flame. If there was a moon, Mary turned off the lights and then they sat looking through the window at the cool blue garden and the dark oak trees.

It was utterly calm and eternal out there. And then the garden ended and the dark thickets of the hill began.

"That's the enemy," Mary said one time. "That's the world that wants to get in, all rough and tangled and unkempt. But it can't get in because the fuchsias won't let it. That's what the fuchsias are there for, and they know it. The birds can get in. They live out in the wild, but they come to my garden for peace and for water." She

laughed softly. "There's something profound in all that, Harry. I don't know quite what it is. The quail are beginning to come down now. At least a dozen were at the pool this evening."

He said, "I wish I could see the inside of your mind. It seems to flutter around, but it's a cool, collected mind. It's so—sure of itself."

Mary went to sit on his lap for a moment. "Not so awfully sure. You don't know, and I'm glad you don't."

## IV

One night when Harry was reading his paper under the lamp, Mary jumped up. "I left my garden scissors outside," she said. "The dew will rust them."

Harry looked over his paper. "Can't I get them for you?"

"No, I'll go. You couldn't find them." She went out into the garden and found the shears, and then she looked in the window, into the living room. Harry was still reading his paper. The room was clear, like a picture, like the set of a play that was about to start. A curtain of fire waved up in the fireplace. Mary stood still and looked. There was the big, deep chair she had been sitting in a minute ago. What would she be doing if she hadn't come outside? Suppose only essence, only mind and sight had come, leaving Mary in the chair? She could almost see herself sitting there. Her round arms and long fingers were resting on the chair. Her delicate, sensitive face was in profile, looking reflectively into the firelight. "What is she thinking about?" Mary whispered. "I wonder what's going on in her mind. Will she get up? No, she's just sitting there. The neck of that dress is too wide, see how it slips sideways over the shoulder. But

that's rather pretty. It looks careless, but neat and pretty. Now—she's smiling. She must be thinking something nice."

Suddenly Mary came to herself and realized what she had been doing. She was delighted. "There were two me's," she thought. "It was like having two lives, being able to see myself. That's wonderful. I wonder whether I can see it whenever I want to. I saw just what other people see when they look at me. I must tell Harry about that." But then a new picture formed; she saw herself explaining, trying to describe what had happened. She saw him looking over his paper with an intent, puzzled, almost pained look in his eyes. He tried so hard to understand when she told him things. He wanted to understand, and he never quite succeeded. If she told him about this vision tonight, he would ask questions. He would turn the thing over and over, trying to understand it, until finally he ruined it. He didn't want to spoil the things she told him, but he just couldn't help it. He needed too much light on things the light shriveled. No, she wouldn't tell him. She would want to come out and do it again, and she couldn't if he spoiled it for her.

Through the window she saw Harry put his paper down on his knee and look up at the door. She hurried in, showing him the shears to prove what she had gone for. "See, the rust was forming already. They'd've been all brown and nasty by morning."

He nodded and smiled at her. "It says in the paper we're going to have more trouble with that new loan bill. They put a lot of difficulties in our way. Somebody has to loan money when people want to borrow."

"I don't understand loans," she said.



"Somebody told me your company had title to nearly every automobile in town."

He laughed. "Well, not all, but a good many of them, anyway. When times are a little bit hard, we make money."

"It sounds terrible," she observed. "It sounds like taking unfair advantage."

He folded the paper and put it on the table beside his chair. "No, I don't think it's unfair," he said. "The people must have the money, and we supply it. The law regulates the interest rate. We haven't anything to do with that."

She stretched her pretty arms and fingers on the chair, as she had seen them through the window. "I suppose it really isn't unfair," she said. "It just sounds as though you took advantage of people when they were down."

Henry looked seriously into the fire for a long time. Mary could see him, and she knew he was worrying about what she said. Well, it would do him no harm to see what business really was like. Things seemed righter when you did them than when you thought about them. A little mental housecleaning mightn't be a bad thing for Harry.

After a little, he looked over at her. "Dear, you don't think it's unfair practice, do you?"

"Why, I don't know anything about loans. How can I tell what is fair?"

Harry insisted, "But do you *feel* it's unfair? Are you ashamed of my business? I wouldn't like it if you were."

Suddenly Mary felt very glad and pleased. "I'm not ashamed, silly. Every one has a right to make a living. You do what you do well."

"You're sure, now?"

"Of course I'm sure, silly."

After she was in bed in her own little bedroom she heard a faint click and saw the door knob turn, and then turn slowly back. The door was locked. It was a signal; there were things Mary didn't like to talk about. The lock was an answer to a question, a clean, quick, decisive answer. It was peculiar about Harry, though. He always tried the door silently. It seemed as though he didn't want her to know he had tried it. But she always did know. He was sweet and gentle. It seemed to make him ashamed when he turned the knob and found the door locked.

Mary pulled the light chain, and when her eyes had become accustomed to the dark, she looked out the window at her garden in the half moonlight. Harry was sweet, and understanding, too. That time about the dog. He had come running into the house, really running. His face was so red and excited that Mary had a nasty shock. She thought there had been an accident. Later in the evening she had a headache from the shock. Harry had shouted, "Joe Adams—his Irish Terrier bitch had puppies. He's going to give me one! Thoroughbred stock, red as strawberries!" He had really wanted one of the pups. It hurt Mary that he couldn't have one. But she was proud of his quick understanding of the situation. When she explained how a dog would—do things on the plants of her garden, or even dig in her flower beds, how, worst of all, a dog would keep the birds away from the pool, Harry understood. He might have trouble with complicated things, like that vision from the garden, but he understood about the dog. Later in the evening, when her head ached, he soothed her and patted Florida Water on her head. That was the curse of imagination. Mary had seen, actually

seen the dog in her garden, and the dug holes, and ruined plants. It was almost as bad as though it actually happened. Harry was ashamed, but really he couldn't help it if she had such an imagination. Mary couldn't blame him, how could he have known?

## v

Late in the afternoon, when the sun had gone behind the hill, there was a time Mary called the really garden time. Then the high-school girl was in from school and had taken charge of the kitchen. It was almost a sacred time. Mary walked out into the garden and across the lawn to a folding chair half behind one of the lawn oaks. She could watch the birds drinking in the pool from there. She could really *feel* the garden. When Harry came home from the office, he stayed in the house and read his paper until she came in from the garden, star-eyed. It made her unhappy to be disturbed.

The summer was just breaking. Mary looked into the kitchen and saw that everything was all right there. She went through the living room and lighted the laid fire, and then she was ready for the garden. The sun had just dropped behind the hill, and the blue gauze of the evening had settled among the oaks.

Mary thought, "It's like millions of not quite invisible fairies coming into my garden. You can't see one of them, but the millions change the color of the air." She smiled to herself at the nice thought. The clipped lawn was damp and fresh with watering. The brilliant cinerarias threw little haloes of color into the air. The fuchsia trees were loaded with blooms. The buds, like little red Christmas tree ornaments, and the open blooms like ballet-skirted

ladies. They were so *right*, the fuchsias, so absolutely right. And they discouraged the enemy on the other side, the brush and scrubby, untrimmed trees.

Mary walked across the lawn in the evening to her chair, and sat down. She could hear the birds gathering to come down to the pool. "Making up parties," she thought, "coming to my garden in the evening. How they must love it! How I would like to come to my garden for the first time. If I could be two people—"Good evening, come into the garden, Mary." "Oh, isn't it lovely." "Yes, I like it, especially at this time. Quiet, now, Mary. Don't frighten the birds." She sat as still as a mouse. Her lips were parted with expectancy. In the brush the quail twittered sharply. A yellowhammer dropped to the edge of the pool. Two little flycatchers flickered out over the water and stood still in the air, beating their wings. And then the quail ran out, with funny little steps. They stopped and cocked their heads, to see whether it was safe. Their leader, a big fellow with a crest like a black question mark, sounded the bugle-like "All clear" call, and the band came down to drink.

And then it happened, the wonderful thing. Out of the brush ran a white quail. Mary froze. Yes, it was a quail, no doubt of it, and white as snow. Oh, this was wonderful! A shiver of pleasure, a bursting of pleasure swelled in Mary's breast. She held her breath. The dainty little white hen quail went to the other side of the pool, away from the ordinary quail. She paused and looked around, and then dipped her beak in the water.

"Why," Mary cried to herself, "she's like me! Maybe she is me." A powerful ecstasy quivered in her body. "She's



like the essence of me, an essence boiled down to utter purity. She must be the queen of the quail. She makes every lovely thing that ever happened to me one thing."

The white quail dipped her beak again and threw back her head to swallow.

The memories welled in Mary and filled her chest. Something sad, always something sad. The packages that came; untying the string was the ecstasy. The thing in the package was never quite—

The marvelous candy from Italy. "Don't eat it, dear. It's prettier than it's good." Mary never ate it, but looking as it was an ecstasy like this.

"What a pretty girl Mary is. She's like a gentian, so quiet." The hearing was an ecstasy like this.

"Mary dear, be very brave now. Your father has—passed away." The first moment of loss was an ecstasy like this.

The white quail stretched a wing backward and smoothed down the feathers with her beak. "This is the me that was everything beautiful. This is the centre of me, my heart."

## VI

The blue air became purple in the garden. The fuchsia buds blazed like little candles. And then a gray shadow moved out of the brush. Mary's mouth dropped open. She sat paralyzed with fear. A gray cat crept like death out of the brush, crept toward the pool and the drinking birds. Mary stared in horror. Her hand rose up to her tight throat. Then she broke the paralysis. She screamed terribly. The quail flew away on muttering wings. The cat bounded back into the brush. Still Mary screamed and screamed.

Harry ran out of the house crying, "Mary! What is it, Mary?"

She shuddered when he touched her. She began to cry hysterically. He took her up in his arms and carried her into the house, and into her own room. She lay quivering on the bed. "What was it, dear? What frightened you?"

"It was a cat," she moaned. "It was creeping on the birds." She sat up; her eyes blazed. "Harry, you must put out poison. Tonight you simply must put out some poison for that cat."

"Lie back, dear. You've had a shock."

"Promise me you'll put out poison." She looked closely at him and saw a rebellious light come into his eyes. "Promise."

"Dear," he apologized, "some dog might get it. Animals suffer terribly when they get poison."

"I don't care," she cried. "I don't want any animals in my garden, any kind."

"No," he said. "I won't do that. No, I can't do that. But I'll get up early in the morning. I'll take the new air gun and I'll shoot that cat so he'll never come back. The air gun shoots hard. It'll make a hurt the cat won't forget."

It was the first thing he had ever refused. She didn't know how to combat it; but her head ached, terribly. When it ached its worst he tried to make it up to her for refusing the poison. He kept a little pad soaked with Florida Water, and he patted it on her forehead. She wondered whether she should tell him about the white quail. He wouldn't believe it. But maybe if he knew how important it was, he might poison the cat. She waited until her nerves were calm before she told him. "Dear, there was a white quail in the garden."

"A white quail? Are you sure it wasn't a pigeon?"

There it was. Right from the first he spoiled it. "I know quail," she cried. "It was quite close to me. A white hen quail."

"That would be a thing to see," he said. "I never heard of one."

"But I tell you I saw it."

He dabbed at her forehead. "Well, I suppose it was an albino. No pigment in the feathers, something like that."

She was growing hysterical again. "You don't understand. That white quail was *me*, the secret me that no one can ever get at, the me that's way inside." Harry's face was contorted with the struggle to understand. "Can't you see, dear? The cat was after me. It was going to kill me. That's why I want to poison it." She studied his face. No, he didn't understand, he couldn't. Why had she told him? If she hadn't been so upset she never would have told him.

"I'll set my alarm clock," he assured her. "Tomorrow morning I'll give that cat something to remember."

At ten o'clock he left her alone. And when he had gone Mary got up and locked the door.

His alarm clock bell awakened Mary in the morning. It was still dark in her room, but she could see the gray light of morning through the window. She heard Harry dressing quietly. He tiptoed past her door and went outside, closing the door silently for fear of awakening her. He carried the new shining air gun in his hand. The fresh gray morning air made him throw back his shoulders and step lightly over the damp lawn. He walked to the corner of the garden and lay down on his stomach in the wet grass.

The garden grew lighter. Already the quail were twittering metallically.

The little brown band came to the edge of the brush and cocked their heads. Then the big leader called, "All's well," and his charges ran with quick steps to the pool. A moment later the white quail followed them. She went to the other side of the pool and dipped her beak and threw back her head. Harry raised the gun. The white quail tipped her head and looked toward him. The air gun spat with a vicious whisper. The quail flew off into the brush. But the white quail fell over and shuddered a moment, and lay still on the lawn.

Harry walked slowly over to her and picked her up. "I didn't mean to kill it," he said to himself. "I just wanted to scare it away." He looked at the white bird in his hand. Right in the head, right under the eye the BB shot had gone. Harry stepped to the line of fuchsias and threw the quail up into the brush. The next moment he put down the gun and crashed up through the under growth. He found the white quail, carried her far up the hill and buried her under a pile of leaves.

Mary heard him pass her door. "Harry, did you shoot the cat?"

"It won't ever come back," he said through the door.

"Well, I hope you killed it, but I don't want to hear the details."

Harry walked on into the living room and sat down in a big chair. The room was still dusky, but through the big dormer window the garden glowed and the tops of the lawn oaks were afire with sunshine.

"What a skunk I am," Harry said to himself. "What a dirty skunk, to kill a thing she loved so much." He dropped his head and looked at the floor. "I'm lonely," he said. "Oh, Lord, I'm so lonely!"



# Immigration and Unemployment

BY BERNHARD OSTROLENK

*Despite ordinary opinion, letting down immigration bars would not increase unemployment—it would in the long run mean salvation for heavy industry*

THE theory that immigration adds to unemployment and its corollary that restriction of immigration must force employers to pay scarcity wages have been favorite popular delusions. They need reëxamination in the light of twenty years of service immigration restriction that culminated in an unemployment crisis unparalleled in the history of the country. Even "common sense" economists must now suspect that unemployment is the consequence of other factors than immigration, possibly seasonal trade variations, cyclical fluctuations, immobility of skilled labor, maldistribution of purchasing power and similar economic phenomena, in which immigration plays no part.

Popular fallacies die hard and it is not improbable that there still are extant survivors of Malthusian mutation who believe that the unemployment problem could be solved by summarily doing away with the 12,000,000 unemployed, thus bringing workers and the number of jobs into balance. The fundamental fallacy with this kind of reasoning is that it assumes that the number of jobs is fixed or decreasing, and hence every additional worker be-

comes a competitor for the available jobs. This is the theory of immigration restrictionists. The facts of course support no such arithmetic assumption. The number of jobs is not fixed by some occult power but increases with industrial activity. But one important factor in increased industrial activity is population growth.

The period of greatest immigration is the twenty-year period from 1890 to 1910 when the country admitted 12,500,000 immigrants. But that period instead of being a period of unemployment also saw an increase in the number of gainfully employed by 15,000,000, from 23,300,000 to 38,200,000. While the gainfully employed increased sixty-three per cent, population increased only forty-six per cent or from 63,000,000 to 92,000,000. During this period, the production of coal in the United States more than trebled, from 140,000,000 to 448,000,000 long tons, a delicate barometer of the trifold expansion of American industry for the period, since little coal is exported. Other production indices show that this period of greatest immigration sharply stimulated industry. Steel production, another basic industrial commodity, increased seven-

fold, from 3,400,000 to 24,000,000 long tons; copper quadrupled from 101,000 to 448,000 tons; American railway tonnage nearly trebled from 77,000,000 to 219,000,000,000; bank clearings trebled from \$58,000,000,000 to \$169,000,000,000. Every phase of American industry supports the contention that industrial activities of the people of the United States trebled during the twenty years, stimulated by population growth of forty-six per cent.

## II

Our uneconomic immigration laws are the consequence of an alliance between labor, badly advised, and the chauvinistic thinking of "superior race" advocates. The latter phase, which has been repeatedly exploded by anthropologists, and which survives merely with the "better than thou" groups, need not be discussed here.

The most valuable contribution to the discussion of immigration, by the Immigration Commissioner in his 1911 report, is the conclusion that immigration should be considered "primarily an economic problem," that our immigration policy "should be based upon economic or business considerations." This takes the question out of the domain of speculative social and racial theories and permits its consideration on the solid basis of measurable economic realities.

For this reason the discussion here is confined to European immigration. Immigration from the Orient is complicated by problems in the domain of prejudice.

The check on population growth during a period when a great industrial nation has adjusted itself to constant population increases is the very factor

which emerges in excess industrial capacity, vacant homes, vacant office buildings and agricultural surpluses. It is not intended to imply here that the present unemployment crisis is altogether the consequence of immigration restriction. But it is true that a sudden cessation of population growth—in part the result of a falling birth rate, and in large part the consequence of a sudden cessation of immigration—results in sudden contraction of the capital goods industry which is an important factor in bringing about unemployment.

A high rate of immigration has always accompanied vigorous industrial activity. It may also be demonstrated that immigration falls when unemployment rises. The classic illustration is the decline in net immigration from 69,000 per month from July 1 to October 31, 1907, to a loss of 14,000 per month from December 1, 1907, to August 31, 1908, then a rise to a total of 113,000 per month from March to April, 1909. These wide fluctuations of migration sensitively coincide with the rise, fall and recovery of industrial activity during the period.

No student of economic developments of the period has seriously held that the 1907 industrial stagnation was a result of the volume of immigration of the period. It was wholly a financial depression. Yet immigration immediately and sensitively contracted with the sharp decline in business activity. The one lesson that stands out is that immigrants will not come to a country that offers no employment. The inflow of immigrants stimulates industrial activity, but if industrial activity becomes stagnant because of other factors, the resultant low wages and unemployment effectively restrict immigration. Adam Smith in 1776 correctly ap-



praised the effect of immigration on a country's prosperity as follows:

"But though North America is not yet so rich as England, it is much more thriving, and advancing with much greater rapidity to the further acquisition of riches. The most decisive mark of prosperity of any country is the increase of the number of its inhabitants. In Great Britain, and most other European countries, they are not supposed to double in less than 500 years. In the British Colonies in North America, it has been found that they double in twenty or five and twenty years."

That these observations are still true 150 years later is demonstrated by the present unemployment crisis which largely is confined to the durable goods industry—the construction industries, iron and steel, machinery, cement, etc. The American Federation of Labor estimates, that out of 12,000,000 unemployed in the spring of 1934, there were only 700,000 unemployed in the consumption goods industries such as food, clothing, textiles, shoes, etc., and 7,000,000 in the capital or durable goods industries. The remainder of unemployed were in the service industries. There is no sign of a revival in the durable goods industries except by the temporary expedient of government construction. The idle plant capacity and vacant homes are effective deterrents to a resumption of activity within the near future in these industries. It is whispered, in informed circles, that the millions of highly trained workers in these industries, the architects, engineers, technicians and other workers whose capital consists of many years of training to acquire skill, will never be used again, that our fundamental need is a shift of workers from the capital to the consumer goods industries.

This may be true, but such a shift involves an economic loss to our people that is incalculable. Many workers will never again regain an economic foothold. It means economic suicide to our best trained and most skilled workers.

Without arguing the point of the need for more consumer goods workers, we are confronted with the fact of unemployment in the durable goods industries for some decades, unless economic bridges are devised to ease the transition. A population growth, incited by an inflow of immigrants, would recreate demand for capital goods, for home and factory building, for use of machinery on factory and farm. The upward turn in industrial activity could be measurably strengthened by lowering immigration barriers.

### III

Not only is it fallacious to attribute unemployment to immigration, but the corollary that restriction of immigration brings high wages is equally misleading. High wages in larger measure are the consequence of efficient production, rather than scarcity of labor or high standards of living. Alaska with 60,000 population has scarcity of labor but no high wages. The farmers always complain of lack of harvest help, but only efficient producers can pay adequate wages to attract help. Nor can labor demand high wages because it has a high standard of living. The high standard of living comes in consequence of high wages. The United States exported as high as \$5,000,000,000 in goods annually after 1920. This can only mean that goods produced here were produced at lower cost than in the importing countries. Our exports in 1929 consisted of about two-fifths raw materials, in which we had a geographic

advantage, and three-fifths manufactured articles, including automobiles, trucks, tractors, electrical equipment, farm machinery, typewriters and other office appliances, sewing machines, etc. In these latter items, labor is the most important cost. The conclusion then would be that wages in these export commodities were less here than abroad. But it is not necessary to marshal statistics to refute such assumption. The fact is that both real and money wages were higher here, but that labor costs were less because of greater efficiency. Our highest priced domestic labor was successfully competing with foreign labor from which our immigrants are drawn. High wages were paid in these industries because of efficient production and because we had an economic advantage. Restriction of immigration had no effect in bringing about these wages.

In fact, urban industries recruited labor from the huge reservoir of our farms. The drop in rate of population during the period affected adversely the market for agricultural products and substituted a cityward rural migration for the inflow of immigrants from abroad.

We attribute our farm problem—the steady decline in prices since 1918—to the increase in production of other countries whose cotton, wheat, hogs and beef were launched on a surfeited and impoverished world market following the end of the World War. We blame Canada and Australia for the wheat glut; India for the excess cotton; Argentina for the surplus of beef and pork. Overproduction is the cry and the myth. Increasing efficiency on the farm has been accompanied by reduced per capita domestic consumption and reduced exports. For the export of agricultural

commodities we could substitute increased domestic consumption by permitting immigration. The foreign market could be brought within our doors. Here, too, the transition that the AAA hopes to make by taking 40,000,000 acres out of cultivation could be eased by stimulating consumption through domestic population growth.

Finally, there is the claim that the immigrant has a lower standard of living. The exhaustive studies on this subject made by Hourwich have effectively quieted this fallacy. The immigrant comes here to improve his economic status. For a short period he may be exploited, but immigrants were among the most loyal supporters of all movements to better labor conditions. At one time it was a common charge that the labor union movement in the industrial centres was largely foreign-made. The implication was that the union members were mostly immigrants. The position of the garment workers is a case in point. Probably no other group of workers was so exploited, though exploitation of the garment workers dates back long before Jewish immigrants came here in large numbers and crowded into the garment industry. A miraculous change has taken place in the last thirty years. Working conditions have improved; the industry has changed from a filthy and congested district to a modern garment centre with adequate working conditions; wages have been raised; the immigrant garment workers who at one time were housed in the "lung districts" of the New York ghettos now are probably the best housed workers in the land. The rows of homes in Brooklyn, the Bronx and on Long Island, although in no way marvels of beauty to aesthetes, certainly are superior homes from the standpoint of equipment,



space, light and other factors, than workers' homes elsewhere.

The immigrants who came to the coal mines of Pennsylvania organized unions to improve their working conditions and their standards of living, while the native workers in the coal mines of Kentucky to this day suffer from low wages and from a much lower standard of living.

#### IV

The reader of this article may wonder to what all this leads. Suppose it is true that immigration does not make for unemployment, that restriction does not increase wages, that the standard of living is not lowered by immigration, is it seriously recommended in the face of 12,000,000 unemployed, a large group of whom may be permanently unemployed, that the bars be lowered, and that hordes of immigrants be permitted to come in to add to the burden on public or private charities? Is it seriously proposed that the CWA be extended to feed and house immigrants as well as native unemployed? It is the contention of the author that a free flow of immigrants would not be detrimental even at this time, though it must be admitted that it seems difficult to prove—that lowering of the immigration bars would help the industrial situation in spite of the 12,000,000 unemployed.

Fully recognizing the feeling of the country that much of this discussion is chimerical, still let us assume that by some miracle sound economics triumphed over prejudices and Congress repealed all legislation on immigration restriction except such as should be applied to criminals, paupers, diseased, etc. What would happen? If economic history is a guide at all, the net effect would be no serious immigration at this

time. From 1930 to 1932, instead of having a net immigration we have had a net emigration of over a quarter of a million people. The 1907 experience is typical of depression migration. There would be no great migration from Great Britain or from France or Russia. Italy puts obstacles in the way of migration. The economic situation in most countries in Europe today is better than in the United States. The only kind of immigration that we might have in large numbers would be immigrants who come in spite of economic disadvantages, those who are subjected to political disabilities at home. In brief, we might have a refugee immigration.

But this type of immigration must be distinguished sharply from the normal type that comes in. In 1848 such a refugee immigration came from Germany, when between 2,000,000 and 3,000,000 people crowded into the United States fleeing from the mailed fist of Prussian autocracy that was then beginning to cast its shadow over the civilized world. The immigrants coming at that time were not laborers seeking jobs, they were entrepreneurs, making jobs. There was no free land at that period. Free land did not come until 1862. Similarly the same type of immigrants coming in today would not be a job-seeking element. They would be entrepreneurs, a manufacturing and mercantilistic group, attempting to develop the chemical industry, the toy industry, or opening international trade avenues with which they are familiar. Many of them might bring capital, and even though coming without capital, it is important to note that the training and psychology is not for job-seeking. This type of immigrant might help bridge us over the unemployment crisis now.

But more important, as soon as re-

vival started, a flow of immigrants would come here creating needs, helping in the revival of the capital goods industry and consuming our agricultural goods. For every immigrant that comes, many jobs would be created.

That is the known experience of 1907.

From these facts it is plain that adequate preparation to push revival along once it has started must include abolition of our unsound immigration restriction.

## The Tree

BY GERALDINE SEELEMIRE MACLEOD

AS AN awed, solitary child  
 I stood beneath this tree—  
 Peering afar into the windy branches where a wild  
 And lonely hawk guarded her nest, her red eyes fixed on me,  
 Trustless, afraid, and fierce. I, as she,  
 Stared, motionless, tranced in the breathless moment endlessly.  
 Softly, at last, stepped back from the evil circle of her gaze  
 Into the stirring sunlight and my pulsing entity.  
 Nor visited this place again until the autumn days  
 Had polished the blown sky  
 To shine like metal, and left the fields to tarnish;  
 Then came too late to see the last leaves fly.  
 But heard, like a witch's departure of unbodied wings,  
 The rattling whisper of the wind.—And high  
 In the last bare branch the torn nest hung,  
 Deserted. Chilled and alone, my young imaginings  
 Went with the hawks, lost from my mind and tongue.  
 Now I have come again;  
 By the old path inevitably returned; and now, as then,  
 I am unpowered: With a slow shock identity  
 Returns through the outraged fibers of this tree—  
 This torn, charred snag with its black face to the sky,  
 Blind to the hunting hawks that pass it by!

. . . It is the one of all among the summer wood . . .



# New Concept of Crops

BY CHARLES MORROW WILSON

*A new cycle of farm surpluses may yet result in prosperity in place of disaster*

IF FARMING is a business, it is assuredly a wasteful business; the most wasteful of all great businesses. But during recent years the labeling of farming as a business has been out of vogue. An urban-minded generation has come to regard it merely as food production. As such it must be an incessant gamble with weather gods, bugs, synthetic price systems, organs of distribution, and vagaries of the human stomach and of pampered appetites.

It seems probable that each year each one of us consumes about 1.4 tons of vegetable produce. In one way or another each one of us pays for about 2.8 tons of vegetable materials that are incidental to getting use of 1.4 tons. By and large the good earth of this land seems to effect about twelve per cent of its possibilities for producing usable crops.

For example, the maximum proven yield of corn, foremost American crop, is 225 bushels per acre, while the average current yield for the United States is about twenty-six bushels to the acre. The maximum proven yield of wheat is 122.5 bushels to the acre; the present average yield about fifteen bushels. Three and a third bales of cotton have been raised on a single acre of land, al-

though the average yield is about one-third of one bale. An average potato crop is 115 bushels to the acre; the proven maximum is 1,055.

But in real practice, our inefficiency in crop production is of secondary importance to inefficiency in crop consumption. May I again speak of corn? The "normal" corn crop is very nearly three billion bushels, with a value usually greater than wheat and cotton, or cattle and hogs together. An average acre of corn provides about 1,680 pounds of grain, 4,000 pounds of stalks and leaves, and 560 pounds of cobs. Probably three per cent of the stalks find use as livestock feed; the grain is usable, a small portion of the cobs is usable. Yet less than a third of the plant growth-weight meets with use. Normal yearly accumulation of plant wastes from corn, cereals, cotton, flax and sugar cane is estimated at 310,000,000 tons of cellulose and other plant materials, a sizable vanload for every citizen between the age of one and one hundred.

As consumers of vegetation, we pay billions for stalks, straws, hulls, rines and pits, which from a standpoint of real utility are worth to us considerably less than nothing at all, for they wait to be burned, buried or hauled away.

One biting irony of this incessant pageant of throw-away is that crop wastes involve the very life-essence of soil, and soil, according to proverb, is the final savings bank of the nation. Man feeds principally upon starches. Yet biologically speaking, starches seem to be devised largely of carbon dioxide and water; whereas the wasted stalks, stovers and hulls of plants, with their pith and fibres and mocking hollowness, actually consume most of the nitrogen, potash, calcium and other precious mineral resources of soil—the very elements whose exhaustion spells agrarian ruin, whose replenishment demands the spending of billions for fertilizers.

But we can not consume any vast quantity of these profitless stalks and stems as food. The actual supply of foods seems plentiful—some would say tragically plentiful. During recent years, corn has been burnt as fuel, potatoes have been left undug, green vegetables and edible fruits tossed in rivers and incinerators. Census figures indicate that the nation has about 65,000,000 fewer acres in crops today than it had fifteen years ago.

By and large, we are inclined to eat less food as the years go by. We are no longer a nation of laboring churls—with appetites proportionate and befitting laboring churls. Food demand wanes with energy demands, which wane with shortened work hours and continued glorification of strong and impersonal machines to do man's work. Food exports stay slim and channels of foreign trade stay constipated with factions, politics and bilious congestions of debts and credits. The nation's stomach is an inelastic consumer, and what is far worse for prevailing agrarian philosophies, it is a slowly decreasing

consumer. Recent years have proven the futility of "eat more" campaigns. When and if we eat more of one sort of food, we most assuredly eat less of another, or of several others.

In terms of the immediate, food markets remain colossal mysteries, oppressed by sickened buying power, muddled over by fumbling hands of government, festered by middle man's greed. We boast of new planning, new economy, new justice. But the nation's estimate of agriculture stays trite and old and pathetically inadequate. Our New Dealers have talked much and labored considerably in behalf of social justice for the farmer. But from a standpoint of concept and definition this agrarian new deal is really a tiresomely old deal. For first of all it continues to define the farmer as a producer of foods, and its essential plannings are built upon a dietary basis.

This dilemma seems first of all a dilemma of definition. The farmer has long since ceased to be merely a producer of foods. He is currently and actually a producer of materials, non-edible as well as edible, industrial as well as culinary. When and if this new concept can be realized, we need no longer concede that the vast panorama of crop wastes is pre-ordained by a mysterious and extravagant bucolic providence; that farming, Nature's trade, can never rival the efficiency of more synthetic trades.

## II

Falteringly yet persistently, industry seeks to reclassify field crops as materials, rather than merely as foods, and to behold in this reclassification a new dawn of efficient harvests that may reduce crop wastes nearer and nearer to final extinction.



The complete story of efficient harvests is long, laborious and paradoxical. Farm by-products of yesterday have become main products of today. Crop wastes of today may very probably prove crop wealth of tomorrow. Assuredly all changes in vegetation values must be supported by painstaking technical research and stubborn industrial experiment. In this synthetic age a price change of a cent a pound may change the agricultural source of any one of a thousand great commodities—and concepts of profits, like concepts of truth, justice, or art, shift and change like the face of a great river.

But the panorama of crop-waste redemption is progressed well beyond the stage of pipe dreams. In the United States today, saving of crop wastes can be recorded as a \$200,000,000-a-year business. Scientific arms of our government labor at some ninety different strivings in increased harvest utility. Some 700 private and corporate businesses are making commercial application and experiment. Henry G. Knight, chief of the United States Bureau of Chemistry and Soils, estimates that research in crop wastes savings has thus far yielded a return of about \$200 in industrial or farm profits for every dollar spent at laboratory research. United States appropriations for all research in crop use total about \$17,000,000 a year (roughly one-half the cost of a first-class battleship dedicated to the tender cause of blasting other first-class battleships into Kingdom Come).

Meat packing industries have proven themselves forerunners and trail-blazers of efficient harvesting. Fifty years ago the American public was accustomed to consume about one-half the live weight of a meat animal. The rest was waste. But gradually commercial

meat packers have lowered this ratio of waste from fifty per cent, or more, to an average of thirteen per cent. Through development and exploitation of hundreds of non-food by-products of meat, and through more versatile processing of edibles, they have succeeded generally in keeping meat consumption apace with an always increasing public, and in salvaging non-food by-products which represent from nine to fourteen per cent of their business volume. Today meat processors, with all their ill-odors and failings, can make profitable disposition of some eighty-seven per cent of the pig that feeds upon corn plants which are only thirty-two per cent usable.

It seems entirely reasonable to infer biological differences between a corn plant and a hog, between a steer and a stack of hay. Yet there seems to be a synthesis between the animal and its provender, even as there seems to be a synthesis between the plant life that flourishes in our fields today, and the jungle growths of carboniferous eras unknown millions of years ago. Yet gas, petroleum and coal, residues from these unknown eras, prove to be from ninety to ninety-five per cent consumable.

Likely enough, in these dim lost ages of dinosaurs and protoplasmic swamps there were incessant and stupendous surpluses of virtually every manner of vegetable and animal life. But presumably there were no economists or politicians to worry about surpluses or to propound cures thereof.

Even today, one may occasionally blunder upon an accepting spirit who fails to become alarmed at the alleged presence of surplus crops. For instance, there is the redoubtable Henry Ford:

"What's wrong with a surplus? It's only through a surplus that we learn

new uses for things. For example, why use up the forests that we were centuries in making and the mines that required ages to lay down, if we can get the equivalent of forest and mineral products in the annual growth of the fields?"

Mr. Ford envisages the day when materials for automobiles may be grown from soil and above the ground. Even now each one of his autos is said to contain between thirty and fifty pounds of vegetable material. But his rhetorical question is not answerable exclusively by Mr. Ford. Industry is finding an increasing army of uses for crop wastes as well as non-food uses of food crops.

### III

Studying the industrial horizon, we see a new tribe of non-food products from corn, foremost American crop and therefore the most wasted of American crops.

In the first place there is the corncob, whose main commercial use is now in the form of furfural, recently changed from a fad chemical to a staple industrial commodity used in making embalming fluids, adhesives, varnishes, mucilage, insecticides, explosive absorbents, paint and varnish removers, black or brown dyes, printing plates, electrical parts, phonograph records. Recovery of furfural is about ten per cent of the weight of the dry material and possible sources include all manner of cereal hull wastes and various other discards of milling.

Furfural is by no means the only redemption from the vast agricultural waste that is the corncob. W. W. Skinner, research chief of the United States Bureau of Chemistry and Soils makes this fanciful suggestion:

"It is not an unreasonably wild specu-

lation, at least to the romancing chemist, to imagine a time when we may ride home from work in a car fitted with electrical equipment made from corncob plastics, and painted with corncob lacquers, enter a home built with corncob boards and covered with corncob shingles, exchange our workcoat for an easy-jacket made of corncob textiles and colored with corncob dyes, seek an easy chair made of corncob products, read the evening gossip from a newspaper made of corncob pulp and printed with corncob ink, toast our toes before an open fire of corncob briquettes, and soothe the senses by smoking a corncob pipe."

The greater part of the corn crop goes to stalk, and the greater part of the stalk goes to naught. Left to rot in the fields, the stalks are but slight benefit to the soil, to some types of soil an actual damage, and in any case a winter haven for crop-ruining insects.

But now industrial uses for cornstalks are making cautious appearance. For example, the Maizwood Products Company of Dubuque gives the whole of its productive time toward changing cornstalks to worth while building materials, insulating board, sheathing, plaster and acoustical boards. The company estimates that the waste cornstalks of Iowa alone could produce about eighty billion square feet of board a year, provided, of course, there were accommodating citizens at hand who felt the need of it.

The advent of celotex is another colorful chapter in the use of plant celluloses, which broadly speaking, comprise about sixty per cent of the weight of all field crops. Celotex is made of sugar cane waste, or bagasse. However skilfully the juice may be pressed from the stalk, a refinery's accumulation of



cane residue is likely to be about ten tons to the harvested acre of cane. In earlier years this bagasse had been burned as fuel, or simply burned. Celotex is made by grinding the bagasse to pulp and shaping the pulp into wall board and similar utilities. The fortunes of celotex, like most other building materials, vary and shift with building demands. But commercial use for sugar cane waste has proven profoundly beneficial to the agriculture of sugar cane. Good cellulose must come of healthy plants, and, by and large, American sugar cane was becoming blight-stricken.

This situation prompted Jacob Jesweit (University of Mageringen and the East Java Experiment Station) aided by the talent and research of the United States Department of Agriculture, to develop the B.O.J., a disease-resisting, firmly fibred cane that has come to be standard in the Sugar Bowl of Louisiana, as well as in greater sugar-producing areas. In this instance, therefore, the fact of saving part of a crop from waste has aided materially in saving the crop itself.

To the story of usable pulps from plant wastes, also belong several new chapters of the romance of paper, which is considerably more interesting than the majority of romances on paper.

Virtually any fibrous plant is a possible source of paper, which is no doubt fortunate since the demand for paper is endlessly growing. In the proverbial year's time, the proverbial average American consumes about twice his weight in paper (about 250 pounds). Each day in the United States we use about 40,000 tons of print paper alone, a mere appetizer to a demand which helps more and more to spell out the current truth that American forests are

being slashed about four and a half times as fast as they can grow.

For many centuries men have recognized possibilities for making paper from field wastes. In 1929 Chevalier de Welsbach, director of the Government Printing Plant at Vienna, completed a highly successful and profitable experiment in making papers from American cornstalks. The experiment produced letter paper of various styles and colors, chancery papers, silk papers in various colors, even cigarette papers; and having paid nine dollars a ton for the cornstalks, produced a net profit of almost \$300 a ton for the Austrian government.

But the idea is not exclusive to Austria. Patents for making papers from cornstalks and husks were being granted to American inventors as early as 1802. Straw papers were made in Germany as early as 1756 and research files show that usable papers have been made from such varied vegetable wastes as sawdust, grape vines, hemp, virtually all common forest woods, thistle stalks, burdock, barley stems, even cabbages. Though wood pulp had become the accepted base of papers, the years between 1890 and 1916 saw various American attempts to manufacture paper from cornstalks, common straws and cotton stalks and sugar cane waste.

Yet, currently speaking, our average yearly manufacture of about 350,000 tons of wheat straw to paper pulps and boarding materials represents no more than a first-down for use of crop wastes in papers. The technical possibilities are handsomely proven; the practical issue is one of dollar-and-penny competition between per-ton costs of cellulose from crop refuse and cellulose from woods. Mother Nature is impartial. There is slight difference between the actual con-

tent of cellulose pulps in common woods, bagasse, mature cornstalks and mature cereal straws. But in the manufacture of paper, equipment is expensive and a cubic foot of "digester" space holds about ten pounds of chipped wood, and only about three of cornstalks or straw, which suggests a costly transition in source. On the other hand, stalks and straws are more easily "cooked" by paper-making chemicals than is wood.

All of which seems merely another way of saying that, currently defined, paper from crop wastes is more a possibility than a reality. But it seems reasonably safe to predict that as timber supplies decrease and their costs increase, there will assuredly come a time when other materials will largely replace woods for paper pulps, and that some portion of the "other materials" may be the unsightly stalks and stovers that clutter our fields after every harvest.

#### IV

We have spoken already of cellulose as a by-product of sugar, which, nutritively speaking, leads us to the subject of milk. Milk, by the way, is the greatest sugar crop. We drink more sugar in milk than we eat outside it. And milk is another of our extravagantly wasted crops.

Modern dairying has to a large extent become a technique of butter-fat production, and from a standpoint of literal food value, certainly of possible commercial values, butter and cream are but minor products of milk. In the annual clearance of American creameries are more than 320,000,000 pounds of milk solids. If a development of wider markets could increase the value of these solids by one cent a pound, it

would mean as much added profit to dairying as could be realized from an increase of two cents a pound for butter.

The foremost non-food product from milk is casein (three per cent of original volume). Casein makes buttons, billiard balls, imitation ivory and various other commercial plastics. It is used in paints, insecticides, in making cloths, adhesives, glues, veneers and water-proofing. But about three-fourths of all commercial casein finds use in making commercial papers. And since paper trades have become synonymous with vastness, that is another reason why domestic casein manufacture stays in the neighborhood of 25,000,000 pounds a year (from 214 factories), an amount approximately matched by imports, largely from Argentina. With a new tariff of 5.5 per cent on casein imports, United States futures in casein-making seem brighter.

The foremost vegetable in the United States is the Irish potato; the second is the sweet potato. This rooty cousin of the morning glory is a tremendous ground-gainer. From a curiosity of the sandy Piedmont it has now changed to an 80,000,000-bushel crop that revels in the light and frequently spent loams that stretch from New Jersey south and west along the Atlantic and Gulf far into Texas. As a rule, market grading of the crop must discard as culls between thirty and forty per cent of the total yield, and culls spell tremendous waste. Recovery of food starches from them would buck another food market glutted with surpluses.

But the United States government is going into the non-edible starch business. The starch is to be made from culled sweet potatoes. Most starches make bitter dextrins, therefore bitter



mucilage. But the dextrin from sweet potatoes isn't bitter and therefore makes pleasantly flavored mucilage for the backs of Mr. Farley's postage stamps. It safeguards the American public from acquiring a rancid taste from licking the aft of G. Washington's visage, Whistler's Mother or the ethereal landscapes of interior America, now being glorified on postage stamps. The scene of the new industry is Laurel, Mississippi; the factory is being built from outright grants of the PWA; the owners and operators are ourselves, otherwise and occasionally known as the United States government. Presumably the undertaking will be given over to private ownership, when and if it becomes successful.

v

So we have listed here a few of the many current strivings in redemption of crop waste, or the acquisition from food crops of non-food by-products. The complete story can not possibly be squeezed into the type frames of one magazine or one book. But the few are apparently typical.

And it may not be unreasonable to list them as road signs that point to a place and time wherein industry and agriculture may function as companions in production of goods, rather than as relentless rivals, wherein competent consumption of crops may change farm products to farm and commercial profits or gains.

To be sure, we have no right to name more thorough consumption of crops as a sure panacea for the still deplorable plight of farms. But surely the issue does hold a place in the enduring dilemma of food surpluses and shortages. For better use of crops promises to serve as a gyroscope, a balance wheel,

for a happier and more spontaneous steering of agricultural destinies.

Congestion in food channels, continued dumpings of precious fruits and vegetables, the grim promise of a renewed cycle of crop surpluses to atone for the exceptionally poor yields of 1934 (and for the past forty years every outstandingly bad drought has been followed by a renewed orgy of overproduction of crops), all these suggest that from the farmer's viewpoint, American agriculture still suffers an economy of abundance.

On the other hand actual records of food consumption suggest that the poor man of the city is most assuredly faced with an economy of scarcity. Even in 1929, foremost bubble year of American prosperity, such an outstanding statistical staff as that of the Russell Sage Foundation declared that that nation actually was enduring an under-supply and under-consumption of many great food products; that production of milk and cream fell 27,000,000 pounds short of public needs; butter was 2,000,000 pounds short; vegetables 7,000,000,000; citrus fruits 3,000,000-000; eggs many millions of dozen.

Mary Van Kleeck, director of industrial research for the Foundation declares:

"It has been assumed in the current economic policies of the United States that the trouble is due to production of 'surplus' as tested by a market that absorbs products at a profit. Hence the effort to destroy the surplus in order to lessen the supply in relation to the demand, thus seeking to raise prices and increase money returns to the farmer. . . . Yet it already has been shown that the people of this country actually lack the necessary quantities of food required for a diet regarded by govern-

ment officials as proper on a basis of scientific nutritive value."

This testimony is repeated as a quotation, by one who holds the highest regard for the research technique of the Russell Sage Foundation and for the sincerity of its workers. As a people we have vastly too much food in sheds and bins, too little in larders. Distribution and circulation remains sluggish and inadequate. Government farm legislation condemns profits with words, defends them with deeds, and therefore 1934 goes down in history as a good year for big incomes, but a tragic year for small incomes.

Perhaps all these generalities are not too far removed from our subject at

hand. Economies of crop consumption seem wholly unable to countenance prevailing economies of crop waste. As an increased percentage of the growth weights of our harvests is put to use; as great crops find avenues for disposal as non-edibles as well as edibles; as materials grown from the land find better scope as materials of industries; stagnant surpluses of food may possibly become active reserves of materials, and when new markets are found for the hulls and stalks and pith of plants, then farmer, processor and industrialist alike may be able to benefit from new vistas of demand, and to dispense the food portions of crops more graciously and cheaply to the hard-up consumer.





# Understanding the Nazis

BY WILLIAM ORTON

*Because Americans possess a set of values exactly opposite to the Germans', it is almost impossible for them to comprehend the reasons for National Socialism*

ABOUT as far east of Denmark as England is west, the river Vistula enters the Baltic Sea; and on the farther side of its broad estuary, some thirty miles from the coast, rises the great monastic-fortress of Marienburg. There is nothing else in Germany to compare with it. The sheer temerity of its upward leap from the river-bank—tier upon tier of walls and battlements rising to heights that would be daring even in stone—attests the power that raised this vast structure out of humble clay. Its aspect of stern purpose dominating these empty eastern plains, rising from crude foundations to the austere beauty of the hidden citadel, has a quality that does not seem to age. Here, over six hundred years ago, lived those northern Romans, the knights of the Teutonic Order. From this seat of authority and devotion they fought the Slavic tribes, founded cities, estates and agricultural colonies, administered law and an advanced agrarian economy, and negotiated with all the powers of Europe. And to their memory official Germany has always reverted in days of humiliation, seeing itself the great colonizer and law-giver of the eastern marches,

the advance-guard of European civilization in a region about which the rest of Europe knows little, and cares less.

For this is not the Germany of popular imagination. Far to the south, in a landscape of hills and waters, of fascinating contrasts between the near and the far, lies the Germany of song and legend, of the lyric and the duel, of the poets and musicians, of the eternally adolescent element in the German soul. This is the land to whose voice young people have responded ever since it was first heard in the Eighteenth Century; it is the Germany of which Germans themselves speak when they describe themselves, in Eucken's phrase, as "the people of the soul." "The depth of feeling common to us Germans," said he, "has become a power controlling our activity and permeating our history to a degree unknown to any other people. In this sense we have a right to say that we form the soul of humanity, and that the destruction of the German nature would rob world-history of its deepest meaning." So, a century earlier, in the ashes of Napoleonic devastation, Fichte had made a religion out of Germanism; so, in the nadir of 1919, von Hindenburg reaffirmed the faith: "Ger-

many, the receptive and radiating centre of so many inexhaustible values of culture and civilization, will not perish as long as she keeps her faith in her great, universal mission."

Here we have the two poles of the German universe: on the one hand, the genius for objective system and order, pragmatic accomplishment and tenacity of purpose, reflected in the tangible successes of social, economic and military organization; and on the other hand, the transcendental aspiration, the romantic introversion, the spiritual profundity, of German feeling and culture. Between these poles the ideal of German unity has always lain in a field of instability and tension; for they are never—they never have been—historically in alignment. And in this constant tension, this conflicting polarity, lies the key to German history.

The tangible forms evolved by the German genius for order have never fully satisfied the German spirituality; and the latter, while throwing off a multitude of images equally noble and vague, has never been able to achieve a tangible form of its own. This dilemma appears historically as the conflict between northern and southern elements in the German folk; but its most interesting manifestations are those in which it exists in the inner life of the same individual. Here, in all probability, is the clue to the neurotic strain in Bismarck, William II, Hitler and some of his colleagues; the frequent and sudden reversions of such men from the realistic and empirical plane to the semi-mystical or theosophical bespeak a psychological—one is tempted to say, a racial—instability. The craving of the German, even when he is most successful, for good opinion, for external reassurance, is a symptom of it; as is also

the mania for parade, for "dressing-up," so conspicuous in the Kaiser and his entourage, and in a certain officer of the third Reich. Nietzsche had a terrifying glimpse of the truth when he hinted (in *Ecce Homo*) that the concepts of the superman and of the extreme decadent are parallel manifestations of a single psychological situation. It is this situation, with its unresolved polarity in both collective and individual life, that underlies the entire Nazi movement.

## II

Historic necessity decreed that the outward union of the German peoples should be delayed until the era of political nation-states. It was a hard fate for the Germans, to whom that ill-starred form of collective life was never a native or a natural expression. In the pitiless world of actuality, Prussia alone proved strong enough to give to Germany the form of a national state; and at every step of the process her success was distrusted by many who desired nothing so much as the union of the German people. Even Fichte, though he made himself the high-priest of German nationalism, based his ideal Germany on neither racial nor political grounds, but on spiritual values. Berlin seemed then, as so often since, to stand for the essentially alien thing: for system, rationality, sophistication—not because it was in truth un-German, but because it sought to assimilate all that could feed and foster its own administrative genius. The northern power alone found strength in its darkest hour to stand against the Napoleonic deluge; the northern arm alone was strong enough to hammer these German tribesmen together; but they shuddered under its blows—as well



they might—and distrusted the very triumphs that they welcomed. Even in the exultant pre-War years, there is in the enthusiasm of the Germans for their Kaiser and their navy a slightly hysterical tone, as of people who are drinking fast in an effort to drown something at the back of their minds that is worrying them.

Then came the crash of 1918. Almost overnight the prestige, the authority and the actual leadership of the Prusso-German unity were gone. Allied propaganda had worked for years toward this end, aided since 1917 by Mr. Wilson's speeches—one wonders whether Mr. Wilson understood all that he was doing in detaching the German people from the German government. The old polarity was loosed at high voltage in an atmosphere full of unknown elements; for when the King of Prussia fled across the frontier, the Emperor of Germany went too. The one tangible form of German unity, never too securely based in the German soul, had vanished in defeat and abdication; the formless passionate currents of subjective Germanism surged over the political landscape; fate posed the question whether any form whatever could contain that deep and bitter flood.

Total collapse was in fact nearer than is generally recognized. Both Communist and monarchist revolts took a strong separatist turn. And underneath them the tension between the objective and the subjective phases of German nationalism broke out in unexpected places; nowhere more poignantly than in the writings of that true and noble German, Walter Rathenau. "We are endowed as no other people is for a mission of the spirit. Such a mission was ours till a century ago; we renounced it, and instead devoted ourselves to the

most far-reaching developments of mechanism and to their counterpart in bids for power. It was Faust, lured away from his true path, astray among witches, brawlers and alchemists. But the Faust soul of Germany is not dead. Of all peoples on the earth we alone have never ceased to struggle with ourselves. And not with ourselves alone, but with our *dæmon*, our God. The soul of the German people lies still in the convulsions and hallucinations of its slow recovery. It is recovery not alone from the War, but from something worse, its hundred years' alienation from itself. We must reunite ourselves with the days before we ceased to be Germans and became Berliners." Alongside that utterance, consider this contemporary declaration of the Communist youth movement: "We must stop thinking as Germans and learn to think as proletarians." With that, the lists are drawn for more than literary war.

### III

The Hitler movement, it will be conceded, was in origin preëminently a youth movement. It attracted, in its early years, hordes of young men unaccustomed to civic or economic discipline, unversed in the problems of civic government and administration, conscious only of a vast amount of vague emotional discontent. It was also—until the occupation of the Ruhr—a south German movement, hungering for "Germanism" in both the worst and the best meanings of that highly equivocal word (the English lack a corresponding term; the Americans have one). From the first it was an open question whether the model democracy of Weimar would be able to canalize this resurgence of a romanticism in

which—as Brandes remarked sixty years ago—“there was concealed from the very beginning a reactionary principle.” It is curious to note how closely Hitler’s diatribes against the constitution-makers of 1919 are paralleled by Marx’s against those of 1848. But for the moment the new constitution had an ally; not indeed among those powers who had first called it into being and then refused it any birthright, but in that very power that was eventually to supersede it. The mere fact that large sections of the German proletariat were willing to put their class before their nation brought out Nazi bludgeons on the side of German unity; and there ensued the spectacle of one Bavarian gang beating up another for the offense of maligning Berlin.

That alliance could not last. True, there were always enough Communists to embarrass the government and serve as a rallying cry for Nazi nationalism; but the Brown-Shirt campaign was moved by an inner compulsion to represent all exponents of liberal reasonableness as enemies of Germany and Germanism. Events played into its hand. The republic became identified, in the ardent imagination of Hitler and his legions, with the era of national humiliation. It was pledged to a treaty by which Germany was made to proclaim herself the criminal among nations; and on the basis of that proclamation, the republic had had to admit the intrusion of so many foreign controls into its civil and economic administration that experts in public law raised the question whether Germany was still a sovereign power. It must be remembered that under the Dawes plan of 1924, in addition to the military and naval limitations of the treaty, the German budget, the revenues of the rail-

road system, the policies of the Reichsbank, the whole of its dealings in foreign exchange, and, collaterally, the state revenues from alcohol, beer, tobacco, sugar and customs, all passed under foreign supervision; so that, as Dr. Herbert Kraus of Königsberg remarked, “If Germany can still be characterized as sovereign today, it is only for the reason that the obligations of the Treaty of Versailles are limited in duration.” The limit actually named in the Young plan—eleven years after the cessation of hostilities—is the hopeful year 1938! It is not the justice of these provisions that is here in question, but their psychological effect upon the young men of Germany.

Even had things gone easier in the international field, the new government had neither tradition, history, nor symbolism adequate to meet the craving for a psychological orgasm; and fate had given it an opponent who was not only a born mouthpiece for mass-emotion, but a very shrewd political swordsman. Take, for example, a favorite argument of Hitler’s. Listen, he says, to what any one of the major political parties says about the others at election time. You would think, would you not, that if one is right the rest must certainly be wrong? Yet what do they do as soon as the election is over? Get together, compromise, patch up their differences, for the sake of running a government that runs nowhere. What sort of leadership can you expect for the great German nation from a system like that? It is a shrewd thrust at a most vulnerable point; it injures not only the authority of the democratic idea, but—far more fatally—its prestige.

The sincerest efforts of the republic to meet and direct the emotional life of its young citizens reacted against it.



A very interesting study by Dr. Paul Kosok (*Modern Germany*, 1933) shows how carefully the new government fostered a genuine cultural patriotism in the educational system. The organized movements for *heimat-kunde* and *heimatschutz* stimulated the interest, dating from pre-War days, in local history, landscape and tradition. The intention was to counteract the idealistic internationalism of the proletarian groups, and mobilize the spirit of youth movement behind the new republican state. But the latter hope was disappointed. At the very time when the voting age was reduced from twenty-five to twenty the state was deprived of that most effective symbol and instrument of political patriotism, the standing army; while, as Dr. Kosok says, "the increasing crisis of the post-War period helped to develop among the youth a much greater tendency toward radical thought and action." The records show the continual drift of membership away from the officially sponsored or recognized youth organizations toward those of the extreme Right and the extreme Left—to both of which the Hitler propaganda very cleverly appealed. The new state had neither a vigorous enough programme nor a strong enough emotional appeal for post-War adolescence; that fact is patent to any one who knows the German youth of today. It was the Nazis, not the state, that benefited by this stimulation of cultural nationalism; and the more they did so, the more effectively they could ask the radicals—with fists as well as words—whether they were really prepared to sacrifice their Germanism to their theoretical class solidarity. A majority of them, thus challenged, decided that they were not.

The outside world, ignoring historic actuality, tries constantly to represent all this as a battle of theories, a conflict of ideas. It was something far more important. It was a conflict of irrational forces against ideas; and it reached this spectacular crisis in Germany because that conflict has so long been latent in the German soul. The burning of the books—a minor incident in itself—is one of those lightning-like symbols that history occasionally throws up to show eyes that can see what is really happening in the depths. The persecution of the Jews is similarly symbolic. The Germans in normal times are no more Jew-haters than the Americans. All the nonsense about a Jewish conspiracy, the Protocols of Zion and such melodramatic fustian had been completely exposed by the London *Times* as far back as 1921. But to the activist Nazis the Jews offered the one interim objective that held no risk of setting one section of the movement against another. The sufferings of these defenseless people ministered to the craving for self-esteem of minds almost deranged by national humiliation; and passions that could find no normal outlet were vented, as so often before, on the stranger within the gates.

It must not be supposed that every German who did not resist the Nazis condoned all this. In particular, it must not be assumed that all the intellectuals who have joined, or conformed to, the movement are either fools or cowards. Many of them were desperate men in desperate circumstances grasping at a desperate remedy. Communism and the class war had no appeal to them on either intellectual or emotional grounds. There is a fairly wide-spread impression in America that the Soviet union is, on the whole, a success. Very

few Germans think so, or would admit that it ever can be. And what, in the way of either hope or achievement, had the policy of liberalism and sweet reasonableness to offer—in Germany or anywhere else? Since 1930, when the beautiful constitution folded itself up in the arms of Article 48, men hungry for leadership might well wonder.

#### IV

The upshot of all this is a historic phenomenon of extraordinary interest. It is a great tribal movement with certain conspicuous Asiatic traits. It is a species of collective life based on irrationality as a positive principle. It is an adventure and a crusade. It is the first attempt of subjective Germanism to attain corporate form on the grand scale. It is full of power and possibility. And it arises within a European system that is patently and irretrievably bankrupt.

To say that the third Reich is based on irrationality as a positive principle is, to the average intellectual, to say that it is unreasonable and nonsensical. That is very far from the intention. Reason and rationality are enemies most of the time; the irrational is not necessarily the unreasonable. The most unreasonable thing in modern history was the French attempt to worship the goddess of reason. One must not assume, because Hitler and his queer companions make hay of the propositions of liberal democracy, and throw into the pile the very axioms on which those propositions are based, that what they themselves say is out of all touch with reality; or that the way it strikes an intelligent American newspaper man is a sufficient interpretation of it.

For example: here is a specimen of this semi-mystical, subjective Germanism

finding utterance in a speech of Hitler (September, 1934): "The idea of human civilization may be built up on an entirely unconscious, because intuitive, fulfilment of a longing and its urge as inwardly determined by the influence of blood. . . . For the purpose of building up a new civilization it would be a mistake to adopt elements of a philosophy imported in the past but not rooted in the blood of our people."

The purport of this and similar utterances (there are hundreds of them) is worth examining. There is the almost transparent admission of deep spiritual dissatisfaction, together with its natural outcome in messianic imagery. There is the implicit despair of help coming from the outside world, disguised as the discarding of alien philosophies; together with a vague and distant hope that philosophic form may somehow be discovered for existing psychological necessities. There is retreat (disguised as racial superiority) from the intolerable complexities of the European situation, and a falling back upon the idea of blood, the Redeemer. This blood-image appears very frequently in early German romanticism as well as in modern German theosophy. Its psychological significance is beyond the scope of this paper, but should be borne in mind; especially in regard to the unreasoning acceptance of the whole Aryan mythology. And finally, there is the unspecific character of this and all such utterances, which Westerners criticize as politically inadequate and Germans praise as politically far-sighted.

But it is more instructive to look at the character of recent Nazi legislation—which very few critics take the trouble to follow in any detail. In the sphere of economics there is a complete and explicit rejection of the mechanistic pos-



tulates of both *laissez-faire* and Karl Marx. There is a vigorous attempt to lift the entire social structure out of the marketplace, and substitute a system of direct personal relationships for the impersonal relationships of the modern economic order. The idea of allowing conditions to be determined by the free forces of supply and demand is basically at variance with the Nazi temper and ideology. When von Neurath recently proclaimed that agriculture was the first section of national business to be "freed from the capitalist system," he meant by the latter term the system under which human situations were pre-determined by purely economic forces. As Walther Darré, Minister of Agriculture, said, "Prices no longer controlled us and our actions but we determined prices." According to Dr. Ley, leader of the German labor front, the basic reason for the liquidation of the labor unions was precisely that advanced by radicals and reformers elsewhere for their retention: namely, that they stood for economic (and to some extent, political) dualism. National Socialism has set itself the task—as yet unaccomplished outside Russia—of resolving this dualism; and the means it relies on are not primarily economic measures, but such "irrational" concepts as "social honor," "loyalty," "leadership." "The people never are bad," said Dr. Ley, "they are noble-minded and good; hatred is a product of cowardice and fear. National Socialism replaced negation of life by the will to live, the joy of living, and affirmation of life. We believe in the people." Whether all this can result in a practicable policy is not the issue here. It is a reversion to a traditional German point of view that found its first expression in the romantic period; and

the reversion is the more significant in that it is largely unconscious.

# V

There is a wise old saying about people who live in glass houses. If the policies of liberal democracy were more clearly tending toward social solidarity and international good will rather than toward social disintegration and international war, critics of the Nazis would be on stronger ground. That fact, however, hardly reaches the root of the matter. The root of the matter lies in the conflict of values. American history and psychology have centred American values about the ideal of personal liberty; and however short of it America falls in practice, and whatever shutting of the eyes to other values its pursuit entails, it stands supreme in American tradition and ideology. But in just the same way, recent German history and psychology have centred German values about the ideal of solidarity. The Germans, putting solidarity first, impinge upon personal liberty to a degree that seems shocking to an American. The Americans, putting liberty first, tolerate economic and social conflict to a degree that seems shocking to a German. Neither side can defend its particular idealism against the criticism of the other; and neither side can be argued into surrender because values are not determined by argument. Americans are fond of saying (though the voices are now a little shaky) that the pursuit of liberty will eventually bring about as much social solidarity as is necessary; and Germans believe that when solidarity is completely achieved and organized, as much liberty as any good German can want will naturally have emerged from the system. There is a bare possibility that both may be

right. As between them, the chances are about even.

Here indeed is the hardest of all ethical dilemmas: to allow to a people who violate one's own set of values the right to seek their own salvation in their own way. It is solved *de facto*, if not *de jure*, by the consideration that there is no possibility of making converts by force. But the student of history will recognize one thing more. He will recognize

that previous forms of German unity, with their inner stress and tension, failed to create a Germany that could live at peace with herself and the world; and he will hope that out of this new beginning may grow a form under which Germany may be more at ease with her spiritual self, and therefore with her neighbors. Admittedly, that hope is faint. All other hope is fainter.

## After Snow

BY FRANCES TAYLOR PATTERSON

SUN, the high Caliph, the tireless giver,  
 Spreads out his treasures on meadow and housetop;  
 Ingots of silver on dormers and gables;  
 Bullion in cloud-heaps, new-mined from the blizzard;  
 Small silver birds on the telegraph wire;  
 Filigree ships in a filigree river;  
 Water to ice and ice into fire.  
 Sun, the sky-treasurer, keeper and spender,  
 Spreads out his treasures on meadow and housetop.

Cold, the proud armorer, swings at his hammers,  
 Making the forest a jacket of splendor;  
 Forging a chain-mail for hemlocks and cedars;  
 Welding a plate-mail for upstanding mountains.  
 Cold, the white Vulcan, the strong smith, the giant,  
 Claps into sheaths the swords of the fountains;  
 Binds the thin waters with tenuous cables;  
 Turns into gargoyles the drip of the leaders.  
 Cold, the proud armorer, swings at his hammers.

Wind, the rash artist, the playboy, the tyrant,  
 Etches with needles of ice on the casement.  
 Wind, the strange farmer who reaps without sowing,  
 Beats with his flails the storm-ripened harvest.  
 Wind, the loud worker, half husband, half plunderer,  
 Stacks the snow grain into glittering drift-mows.  
 The scold of the seasons, the braggart, the thunderer,  
 Snapping the branches and ranting and blowing,  
 Down through the valley goes wind, the mad tyrant.



# Red Ribbon Gone

BY KARLTON KELM

## *A Story*

THE table was set for two, just two, in the special guest-room off the side-parlor set aside for the reception of Mother Superior's special, intimate friends.

Sister Agatha stood back, her thin face tight-lipped with approval as she looked.

The lacy banquet cloth that fell gracefully to the floor, the special silver, the special dishes with neat little pyramids of sandwiches, the crust wastefully but delightfully cut off, of course—the olives, the small creamy-frosted cakes, the two lighted candles with the bowl of nasturtiums between softly flowering their delicate color. The dim seclusion of drawn shades before nightfall.

How close that little table seemed, how close and snug. What an air of rendezvous, expectancy—not really a convent room at all now, no convent smell of wax and varnish and faint antiseptic, but a part of a room with rich-hanging drapes, and inviting little nooks with cushions, and incense of a pagan fragrance.

Sister Agatha sighed, then Sister Mary Margaret, cook, came in red-faced from steam and looked and sighed and giggled, her small round blue eyes sparkling with adventure.

One by one they all came in and looked, the sisters, looked and exchanged quick nods and long glances, their eyes very bright in the soft candle-glow. They saw the little table set as their own was set never, and one of them asked in a hushed tone, "Is Sister Mary Rose down yet?" and another whispered, "She's waiting in the parlor with Mother Isabella," and then they all looked one last time and filed out, their rosaries gently jingling at their sides—all except Sister Agatha who remained to serve.

The room waited, then the door to the special parlor opened and in stepped Sister Mary Rose lightly, bright cheeks framed in freshly starched wimple, lustrous dark eyes very deep and big with occasion. A young nun, Sister Mary Rose, girlish and animated of gesture. Her quick smile took in everything, then turned on him who followed her and Mother Isabella.

Mother Isabella was no longer acting-Mother but had given over reign to Mother Philip—was now just one of the Sisters again. Still, her past authority seemed to lend a dignity, a rightness, to this meeting, which without her would have seemed too worldly, even sinful.

Mother Philip had gone to the city

on business. By the time she returned the little table in the special dining-room would be cleared, and Father Fenton and some of the Sisters, no less than three, would be in the general parlor swapping stories, in which she would probably join until supper-gong.

Sister Mary Rose and Father Fenton took their places at the table. They asked repeatedly shouldn't they draw up a chair for Mother Isabella, but Mother Isabella fumbled in her sleeves for her handkerchief, said no, lunches didn't agree with her, and right after that excused herself, assuring them she'd be right back.

It was *their* party. This all the sisters understood. It was coloring their lives today with the faint pink of semi-worldliness. It was an occasion indeed! A dramatic anti-climax to the legend that had come to them with Sister Mary Rose's entrance into the convent. The legend of a boy and girl who in a confusing modern world had sacrificed a great love of the flesh for a greater one of the spirit. For the sisters it had woven a web of romance about Sister Mary Rose's gentle person until they had come to set her apart as some one not quite of them but added to them, a delightful embellishment—some one the drama of whose significance they could live vicariously, enjoying the poetry of it, poetry in terms of balconies and moonlit gardens and that one ultimate and dramatic parting.

And now the meeting again! The first since that parting, since her years with them in the convent, his in the seminary. It had come about so suddenly with a letter from her brother. Enclosed with it had been a whole packet of letters, old letters, frayed at the edges from many readings and tied up neatly with much red ribbon. (*Love*

*letters*; the sisters could tell.) In rummaging through the attic her brother had come upon them and, not knowing what else to do, had dispatched them to his sister. Would she keep them? It was most irregular, to be sure; still, if they were very beautiful letters, provoking only beautiful memories—had she destroyed them already, mused the sisters, and would they ever know whether she had or hadn't?

It was the first time she had ever mentioned his name to them, that day the letters came. "Oh, Francis's letters. I feared I hadn't burnt them all." She had said that and no more. They had cherished her silence too, because it was more eloquent of the sacredness of that parting, that sacrifice, than anything she could have spoken. But when her brother's letter said that an old friend of hers had just been stationed in a parish close to their convent they had all guessed the priest was "Francis," and it was Mother Isabella herself who had suggested the tea-party. It was fun keeping a little secret from Mother Superior occasionally.

## II

Sister Agatha passed sandwiches and poured coffee with Oriental stillness and precision, only the faint rustling of her skirts, the gentle tinkling of her rosary, breaking the stillness, the snugness, of the little room, as the eyes of Sister Mary Rose lifted in open child-like roguishness to Father Fenton over the nasturtium blooms, yellow and mild scarlet, between the soft-flickering light of the two candles which alone in the building were not blessed but brightly colored blue and decorated voluptuously with beaded yellow dragons.

Father Fenton grinned. "Your brother told me about those letters he



found. It would be great sport reading them now, but of course you destroyed them."

Sister Mary Rose stopped smiling and fingered her silver. "No," she said, "I did not destroy them—not yet."

"Ah, you've been entertaining the sisters with them!" chided Father Fenton.

"No," said Sister Mary Rose, her eyes on the silver, her fine brows raised.

Father Fenton laughed, a long explosive laugh that seemed to release excess energy from some inexhaustible source in the depths of his strong and full body.

"No," repeated Sister Mary Rose, facing him as she adjusted her gimp. "No, they've not read them. They've seen them, but they've not read them."

Father Fenton absorbed himself with eating. "Pickled crabs," he discovered, helping himself. Still a young priest, there was only a slight thickness through the shoulders, a thickness about his whole darkness, to remind her that he was not the boy whose backyard had been separated from hers by only a very narrow alley lined with garbage cans and milkweeds. "Francis," she said softly, her face subsiding to the relaxation of memories, "we used to steal them. Crab apples. I think it was the nicest thing we ever did. I can't feel sorry."

Father Fenton ate heartily. "I bet you bawl out your girls for the same thing though," he teased. "I bet you tell them that old one about the boy who started by stealing apples and ended with robbing a bank."

"That's it. And all the time I don't want them to miss the *fun* of it."

The priest only laughed at her.

"I know it's such a little thing. But it bothers me to be just right. I want to be sincerely so—always."

The priest stopped eating, stopped laughing. "Mary," he said, "I'm afraid you never had a very strong sense of humor."

She smiled whimsically. "You used to boost me up a tree on your shoulders, and I'd shake the limbs while the apples fell down all around like big hailstones. One time I fell on you and it hurt your wrist."

"You offered to kiss it to stop the hurt."

"I did."

"But it kept hurting just the same, Mary."

"Yes," she said quietly, "just the same."

His spoon suspended above his coffee cup, Father Fenton frowned briefly. Then Mother Isabella cleared her throat loudly and returned. Sister Agatha came in from the kitchen with ice cream and they all four talked ice cream and parish problems and Sister Mary Rose's girls and the roads and the rain. Then suddenly from Father Fenton: "Now then, Sister, won't you go for the letters and read them to us. I'm sure Mother would enjoy them."

For a moment Mother Isabella's consternation equalled Sister Mary Rose's, but Father Fenton only smiled, the smile gone slightly bland.

Sister Mary Rose stood up. "Of course." Her voice was strangely tight and small. "Of course—I'll get them." She hurried from the room, while Mother Isabella turned questioningly to the priest.

"She's come to see the past as the rest of you see it, hasn't she?" he said soberly.

Two great puzzled lines dug themselves between Mother Isabella's softly faded old eyes. "Either that, Father, or simply as it was." In her look to him

was slight accusation, but the priest's smile was clear and easy, so that her puzzlement deepened until a slow new understanding came and smoothed it away. By the time Sister Mary Rose returned Mother Isabella was regarding Father Fenton with a new gentle appreciation.

Sister Mary Rose brought forth the little packet of letters from the folds of her habit and unwound from them the red ribbon, slowly, silently.

"Wait," said Mother Isabella. "Let us call in the Sisters. It will be such good fun for them." There was a forced sprightliness in her tone, as if she had spoken from necessity rather than from any real desire.

Sister Mary Rose caught her breath, suspended between the suggestion and her reply. "Of course," she said finally in the same small tight voice, "of course, Mother." And there was something dying in her throat now, something dying in her look, as Sister Agatha was dispatched for the nuns.

They came, gently nodding, smiling, a very old one among them tittering benevolently, a bony-knuckled hand over her teeth, a happy tear falling from a blinky tired old eye. They all exchanged nods and smiles, except Mother Isabella who sat motionless, her eyes fixed on Sister Mary Rose a bit sadly.

They waited, bonnets bent forward, hands in their laps or fumbling with the cord about their waists, blissfully waiting for what they felt would be something beautiful. A beautiful story told in letters tied with red ribbon—the legend they'd dramatized repeatedly in their minds now to be enacted before them.

Her hands shaking so that she could hardly control them, Sister Mary Rose

opened the first letter, then handing it across the table to Father Fenton with a sudden gay defiance, the defiance of quick hate, she said, "Here, Father, *you* read it."

### III

It wasn't that they weren't good letters. They were very entertaining, very amusing letters, and made the sisters smile. But the sisters had not come to smile; they had come to—to sigh. And *these* letters!

HELLO KID,

Sorry I didn't get to write sooner . . . tough job . . . darn canning factory . . . lug hot cans around all night . . . blisters on my hand . . . got the worst stomach ache! Had a keen date yesterday off hours . . . I'll smuggle a couple of cans of peas home to you.

Sister Mary Rose sat very still, her smile small and of a bright hardness.

HI, MARY,

Tough being a freshman . . . campused for the weekend too . . . a couple of wise Sophs made me buy my own pajamas . . . darn chemistry . . . haven't even met a girl yet . . . Sophomore dance next Tuesday, all the Freshies got to buy a ticket, care to come down to it? You dance well . . . pretty good orchestra.

Yours truly . . .

"Well, did you go?" asked Sister Mary Margaret, cook, her small eyes round with curiosity.

"I went," said Sister Mary Rose, "but I was not his partner. There was a boy with large ears for me. The girl *he* took was blond and fluffy. He brought her with him next day to see me off at the station." Sister Mary Rose spoke freely now, her voice of a clear bright hardness.

DEAR MARY,

Are you coming down for graduation? I can get you some good dates if you do . . . Sorry you're disappointed about my not stay-



ing home this summer but I want to get an old Ford and see the country because in the fall (don't faint) I'm going to the sem.

Your friend,  
Francis Fenton.

Father Fenton was watching Sister Mary Rose, his brow no longer clear, his smile forced, uneasy. This hard bright defiance of hers told so much that her earlier modest confusion had not. Somehow it made him see clearly what he had always been too blind, too self-centred, to see. He saw to be real what he had been so sure never existed in those other days but only come later with a convent legend—a legend he had now destroyed, purposely.

He turned to Mother Isabella and found her studying him noddingly, gently rebuking him for his blindness and yet approving the outcome of this he had done, saying through her softly faded eyes it was for the best.

The last letter had been interrupted by the doorbell. "Mother!" gasped the sisters, remembering how late it was getting, and all were too frightened to move. But it wasn't Mother Philip after all, so that by the time she did come Sister Agatha had cleared the table, and Mother Isabella, Father Fenton, and Sister Mary Rose, and the very old nun, who was always given special consideration because she was becoming childish, had gone into the general parlor.

Soon after that Father Fenton left,

in his eyes something serious now, terribly so, as he looked at Sister Mary Rose with a pleading goodbye that asked both forgiveness and understanding of what he had done.

Alone with Sister Mary Rose and the old one, Mother Isabella said quietly, "We must not try this again; we were nearly caught."

Sister Mary Rose moved slowly from the room. "They looked so sad," she said, "so sad and disappointed in spite of their laughter. I'm sorry for *them*, that's all."

The old nun, who did not understand, made tch-tch sounds with her loose gray lips and said, "You think Mother suspects us?" but neither of them answered her. They looked at each other for a moment, but Mother with encouraging softness, the Sister with her new bright strength that needed no softness, as if now she could be not only right, but sincerely so as well—always—as she had desired. Then Sister Mary Rose turned and left the room, the letters clutched in her hand in front of her, the red ribbon gone.

They heard her walk down the corridor to Mother Philip's room, her rosary gently jingling at her side. They heard her rap, heard Mother's strong "Come in," and then they heard her enter the room and quietly close the door after her.





# The Kingless Kingdom

BY G. E. W. JOHNSON

*The assassination of King Alexander of Jugoslavia and its aftermath have emphasized the menace to peace of Hungary's discontent*

IF A COMPETITION were held to determine the most dissatisfied nation in the world, these distraught times would produce many candidates for the dubious honor. From China to Paraguay, from Japan to Germany, the nations would tread upon each other's heels in clamoring for first place; but it is more than likely that a conscientious judge would award the palm to the land of the Magyars. Germany lost about one-tenth of her area and population by the Treaty of Versailles, and has been giving vent to her indignation in no uncertain terms ever since. If the Germans regard their losses as galling, the Hungarians regard theirs as catastrophic and insufferable. By the Treaty of Trianon, hastily dashed off by harassed diplomats as a sort of afterthought to the Treaty of Versailles, Hungary lost two-thirds of her area and population. Before the War Hungary had a population of twenty-one millions; today, after allowing for the natural increase of population in the post-War period, she has a population of about nine millions. This crippling dismemberment of the Hungarian kingdom, which boasted a history of a thousand years, cut Magyar pride to the quick. True

enough, of the thirteen million people lost, fully ten million were non-Mag-yars who had long kicked against the pricks of Hungarian oppression; but the nearly three million Magyars who now passed under the rule of the Little Entente powers—700,000 to Czechoslovakia, a million and a half to Rumania, and half a million to Jugoslavia—reversed the tables and afforded the Hungarians a moral peg upon which to hang their claims for a revision of the treaty. When Hungarians learned of the losses inflicted upon them by the Treaty of Trianon, the anguished cry "*Nem, nem, soha!*"—"No, no, never!"—choked forth from their lips; and, under the guidance of their political cheer-leaders, they have kept chorusing this refrain ever since with the lustiness of an American football crowd.

A dispassionate observer can not but feel that there is some justice in the Hungarian case. When the Little Entente powers were being rewarded for their services to the Allied cause, they were naturally impelled to claim everything in sight; Hungary herself, racked in turn by Red terror and White, was unable to present her case effectually; and the overworked arbiters of



the world, bewildered by the conflicting claims of a dozen ethnic groups of whose existence they had never before heard, took the easy course of giving their allies everything short of a *carte blanche*. The national groups were so inextricably intermingled that no boundary line could conceivably be drawn that would eliminate minorities altogether; as a matter of fact, there is still in Hungary a minority of 100,000 Slovaks, and smaller though substantial minorities of Rumanians and Jugoslavs. But some of the considerations that determined the frontiers were of a purely strategical or economic nature that negated all considerations of national self-determination. For example, the desire of Rumania and Jugoslavia to have entirely within their borders important railway lines led to the acquisition by these countries of territories peopled almost exclusively by Hungarians.

The "unredeemed" Magyars are for the most part concentrated in solid blocks contiguous to the Hungarian frontier under conditions that are a perpetual affront to Hungarian national pride. Some agricultural holdings are split in two by the frontier, and the customs regulations lead to all kinds of vexations in the harvesting of crops and the management of farms. The Jugoslav Government allows merchandise to cross the frontier only at nine designated points in a stretch of several hundred miles. According to Hungarian allegations, some farmers are so situated that they are obliged to go out of their way as much as ninety-five miles in order to bring home crops grown only a few yards away. Though a revision of the frontiers might ameliorate this grievance, there are other conditions more difficult of solution. There is, for instance, the plight of the half million

Szeklers of southeastern Transylvania, who are separated from their kin in Hungary by a solid belt of Rumanians. It is impossible to reunite this district with Hungary without handing over a large Rumanian population to alien rule. But this awkward consideration does not deter the Hungarians from yearning to be reunited with their brethren who are pictured as enduring a Babylonian captivity. The sense of moral grievance which Hungary feels with respect to those territories of which she has been unfairly deprived naturally tends to transform itself into a desire for revenge, which dreams of recovering all the lost territories, whether populated by Magyars or not. This sentiment is fanned by the former Magyar landowners, whose holdings in the lost provinces have been expropriated, and who have flocked to Budapest to stimulate the irredentist aspirations of their kin in Hungary.

There was a time when Dr. Beneš, the Czechoslovak Foreign Minister, and other Little Entente statesmen occasionally hinted at the possibility of minor frontier rectifications to Hungary's advantage. But nothing ever came of these vague offers, and Hungary's increasing intransigence of recent years seems to have ended the possibility of an appeasement in this direction.

## II

For Hungary the immediate post-War period was tragic internally as well as externally. As if the disastrous consequences that flowed from the loss of the War were not sufficient to fill the cup, Hungary's domestic history was probably the most harrowing of any country outside Russia. The democratic republic set up by Count Michael Károlyi was afflicted with the same numb-

ness that had paralyzed the Kerensky régime in Russia and yielded without resistance to the assaults of Béla Kun's Communists. Hungary thereby became the only country except Russia to go Bolshevik, but the outcome was vastly different. After four months the Bolshevik government collapsed, partly because of a boycott of Budapest by the peasants and partly because of an invasion by the Czech and Rumanian armies. The Red terror was then followed by a White terror, and the usual crop of atrocity stories made their appearance.

The Whites were anxious to reestablish the Habsburg monarchy, but the Little Entente powers, fearing the seductive influence of dynastic loyalties upon their newly acquired populations, sternly forbade a restoration under the threat of instant war. When ex-Emperor-King Charles made his two rash and ill-planned attempts to regain the Hungarian throne, the Hungarian ruling class, in defiance of every instinct of their nature, were compelled to resist his efforts and to banish him from the country.

Being denied a king through foreign veto, the Hungarians have come to attach a mystic significance to the institution of monarchy as a symbol of national independence. They insist on calling their country a kingdom, and Nicholas Horthy, a former admiral of the now defunct Austro-Hungarian navy, was appointed under the title of Regent to the headship of the state—a situation that has led some wag to declare not unwittily that Hungary is a kingdom without a king ruled by an admiral without a navy.

The man chiefly responsible for piloting Hungary through the troublous post-War decade was Count Stephen

Bethlen. Though he could not forget that his native province of Transylvania was now a part of Rumania, Bethlen did not allow his uncompromising irredentist yearnings to entrap him into any rash enterprise against his powerful neighbors. He sought to free his country from the strangling economic grip of the surrounding states by promoting friendly relations with Italy, a policy which was encouraged by pronouncements made from time to time by Mussolini advocating a revision of the peace settlement to Hungary's advantage. In 1931 the shadows of the world crisis began to deepen in the valley of the Danube and Hungary found herself in the throes of a financial crisis. Count Bethlen's prestige was impaired and he decided it was time to resign his stewardship. He was succeeded by Count Julius Karolyi—a cousin of the exiled Count Michael—who swung to a policy of friendship with France, largely owing to the fact that Hungary was in dire need of financial assistance, which could only be obtained from Paris. In September, 1932, however, the premiership passed to General Julius Gömbös, former Minister of War, who revived Bethlen's Italophile policies. He also struck a new note by seeking to cement closer relations with Germany. This pro-German policy is regarded with dislike by the Hungarian legitimist nobility, who yearn for a restoration of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy and detect in Gömbös's friendship with Hitler a renunciation of this aspiration. This breach between Gömbös and the aristocracy was reflected in the composition of his cabinet. It was remarked as a striking innovation that under Gömbös the cabinet, for the first time in modern Hungarian history—disregarding the Béla Kun interlude—



was graced by the presence of not a single nobleman.

General Gömbös, like the aristocracy, is a monarchist, but he is not a legitimist. He inherits the tradition of those Hungarian nationalists who rebelled against Habsburg rule in 1848 as a form of Austrian tyranny. He favors the choice of a monarch by a free election, which seems to imply that he is averse to entangling dynastic alliances with Austria. If the Hungarians are to go to the trouble of restoring the monarchy, they want a king who will reside in Budapest, not an absentee monarch living in Vienna. Gömbös's coolness to the notion of reunion with Austria, despite his political friendship with that country, accords with his policy of currying Hitler's favor as a potential patron in Hungary's crusade for treaty revision. To press the idea of Austro-Hungarian union would involve not only defying the war threats of the Little Entente, but also running smack against Hitler's project of Austro-German *Anschluss*, and Gömbös considers such a situation too much like skating on thin ice.

### III

Magyar statesmen, while dreaming of restoring Hungary's ancient splendor, recognize that Hungary alone can avail nothing against her strong neighbors. From the military point of view, Hungary is very perilously circumstanced. Save for the short Austrian frontier, she is encircled on all sides by enemies. Her present territory consists of an almost unrelieved plain; she is no longer protected by natural frontiers such as the Carpathians provided in pre-War days. In the event of war, unless prompt assistance were forthcoming from some powerful ally, she could be

overrun in no time by the Little Entente countries, whose combined population outnumbers hers sixfold. Budapest, the capital of Hungary, can be easily shelled from Czechoslovak territory. Szeged, the second city, is almost skirted by the Yugoslav frontier. Debreczen, the third city, is only a few miles from the Rumanian border. All of Hungary's most vital centres are militarily indefensible.

If revision is to come, it must come by the aid of some foreign power. For a long time Hungary pinned her hopes on France. From a purely French standpoint, the Quai d'Orsay has objections neither to a moderate programme of territorial revision nor to a Habsburg restoration. But Hungarian hopes that France would exert her influence upon the Little Entente to effect these ends have been disappointed. France fears that any pressure on the Little Entente countries would drive them into the arms of Hitler, and she is taking no chances. This was made abundantly clear by M. Barthou, the late French Foreign Minister, in a forthright speech delivered before the Rumanian Parliament last June. "Your frontiers," cried M. Barthou, "have been, are and always will be yours. Be assured that if a square centimetre of the soil of your country is touched, France will be at your side!" This uncompromising pledge provoked "great surprise and indignation" in Hungary, if we are to believe Kálmán Kánya, Hungarian Foreign Minister. It served to confirm the policy of strengthening Hungary's relations with Italy and Germany. "Our foreign policy," said General Gömbös, "reposes upon an axis passing through Rome and Berlin."

Both Italy and Germany have been eager to build up blocs in rivalry to

France and to each other, and both have consequently made advances to Hungary by expressing sympathy for her revisionist claims. Hungary would have been only too delighted if the two big powers would have furthered her ambitions in perfect harmony; but to her intense disgust, her friends soon fell out because Hitler and Mussolini could not see eye to eye over Austria. Having to pick one or the other as his patron, Gömbös chose Mussolini, though he was careful to avoid assuming an anti-German attitude. Austria serves as a bridge, connecting Hungary with Germany in the north and Italy in the south. As long as Austria is estranged from Germany and linked to Italy, geographical considerations dictate that Hungary should throw in her lot with Italy. But if the Austro-German *Anschluss* should ever be consummated, then equally cogent reasons would prescribe a Hungarian shift into Germany's orbit. The wily Gömbös wants to be prepared for any eventuality, and therefore, despite his treaties with Austria and Italy, he has persisted in reiterating his friendship for Germany.

As far back as 1923 Captain Gömbös, as he then was, fresh from repressing the Communists in the White terror, visited Munich to study the technique of a rising young agitator named Adolf Hitler, who had already made himself the *bête noire* of the Marxists. The two practitioners of strong-arm politics pledged each other their everlasting friendship. Ten years later Gömbös again visited Hitler, but this time it was the Prime Minister of Hungary visiting the Chancellor of the German Reich. Gömbös was the first head of a foreign government to visit Hitler: thus was broken the diplomatic quarantine which all other countries had thrown

around Germany. In June of 1933 Gömbös flew to Berlin to confer with Hitler and later attended, in the Chancellor's company, a rally of 60,000 Storm Troops at Erfurt. Gömbös departed with a compliment to Hitler on his zeal in suppressing Communists. The Nazis, eager to assure the German people that at least one foreign country appreciated the merits of the godlike Adolf, trumpeted abroad the news that Hungary was in full accord with Germany. Gömbös was thus maneuvered into a most embarrassing position. Hitler was at this time exerting every nerve to break down Chancellor Dollfuss's resistance to the Nazi siege of Austria, and the world jumped to the inevitable conclusion: Gömbös was backing Hitler in this policy. But at the very moment when this rumor received currency, Gömbös was engaged in negotiations for treaties intended to create closer political and economic ties with Austria and Italy. What to do? To disavow his sympathy with *Anschluss* meant alienating Hitler; to fail to do so would provoke the frowns of Mussolini. Gömbös wriggled out of his tight spot by paying a hasty visit to Vienna, where he privately assured Dollfuss that Hungary had not made herself a party to Hitler's designs on Austria. In March, 1934, Gömbös and Dollfuss journeyed to Rome to sign the political and economic pacts that closely linked the three countries. But Gömbös soon took the precaution of publicly assuring Hitler that these agreements did not involve any Hungarian guarantee of Austrian independence. "I am thoroughly convinced," Gömbös told the Hungarian Parliament in May, "that we should not interfere in the matter of Austro-German *Anschluss* or in Germany's internal politics."



IV *Start*

Besides the existence of Magyar minorities in the Little Entente countries, there is another source of dissension. This is the aid and comfort extended by Hungary to the non-Magyar minorities in those same countries who are dissatisfied with their present status. Among these disaffected groups are the Slovaks of Cechoslovakia and the Croats of Yugoslavia. These ethnic groups have their local traditions which lead them to make demands for autonomy that range all the way from limited self-government to complete independence. It is natural enough that Hungary, cherishing her grievances against her neighbors, should instinctively sympathize with these recalcitrant elements and offer them asylum when they are obliged to flee their own countries. When these exiles proceed to take advantage of their residence on Hungarian soil to concoct terroristic outrages against their governments, it is equally understandable that these governments should bitterly resent this situation and threaten drastic action against Hungary.

It can thus be seen that there are really two sources of discord between Hungary and her neighbors. On the part of Hungary, there is the grievance that nearly three million of her people are separated from their fatherland; on the part of the Little Entente countries, there is resentment that Hungary has been giving shelter to political exiles who are contriving terrorist plots aimed against their rulers and governments. Although this latter issue has long been a vexed question, the events of the last few months crystallized it into an acrimonious dispute between Hungary and Yugoslavia centring around the assassination of King Alexander.

The first reaction of the distant observer to these diplomatic brawls is that it is just another petty and sordid Balkan quarrel, of no more consequence to the world at large than the never-ending war between Bolivia and Paraguay. If the controversy were indeed limited to the two principals, such a conclusion might be justified; but they do not stand alone. The parties are each linked to great powers outside the Balkans. Yugoslavia is allied to France; Hungary is linked to Italy and friendly to Germany. Those who recall that the last World War was precipitated by a quarrel in which Austria-Hungary accused Serbia of complicity in the assassination of Archduke Francis Ferdinand, can not but feel a sense of anxiety when they see another quarrel, startlingly similar in its details though with a reversal of rôles between the actors, breaking forth twenty years later. Largely owing to the moderating influence of France and Italy, the recent crisis seems to have been successfully surmounted; but it momentarily brought into clear focus so many of the tensions that underlay, and still underlie, the Danubian region, that it is not without interest to recall some of the highlights of the controversy, for no one can tell when it may flare forth with renewed virulence at some fresh provocation.

The quarrel between Hungary and Yugoslavia had come to the attention of the League of Nations even before the death of King Alexander. Last May the Hungarian Government brought before the Council of the League a complaint setting forth that Yugoslav frontier guards were with "inhuman cruelty" shooting down persons who sought to cross the frontier without authorization, and that fifteen deaths had been caused in this way in the years 1931-33.

Jugoslavia replied on June 4 with a long note containing charges that Hungary was harboring political terrorists who were guilty of contriving outrages against Yugoslavia. It asserted that the headquarters of the terrorists was a farm called Jánka Pusztá, situated on Hungarian soil less than four miles from the Yugoslav frontier. Here, it was alleged, thirty to forty Croat emigrés were constantly in residence, practised on a shooting range, and were given instruction in the handling of bombs and other infernal machines. Hungarian officials were accused of complicity: it was charged that newcomers were escorted to the farm by Hungarian police, that certain Hungarian officials maintained intimate relations with the exiles, and that they were permitted to travel abroad on Hungarian passports. Most serious of all, Hungarian authorities were criminally negligent in permitting the emigrés to make incursions into Yugoslav territory for the purpose of planting bombs and committing other terroristic acts. The note cited a list of eleven such outrages, involving the death of seven persons, alleged to have been committed in 1932 and 1933 by terrorists operating from Hungary. In view of these conditions, the Yugoslav frontier guards were compelled to exercise the utmost stringency in guarding against the illegal entry of unauthorized persons.

Under the mollifying influence of the League, the two powers were persuaded to enter into direct negotiations for the settlement of their dispute, and on July 21 it was announced that a preliminary accord had been reached.

## v

But it soon developed that the dispute between the two irascible neigh-

bors had merely been scotched, not killed. It broke forth with redoubled fury following the assassination of King Alexander of Yugoslavia and M. Louis Barthou, the French Foreign Minister, at Marseilles on October 9. Confessions obtained by the French police from three accomplices of the assassin revealed that the crime had been carefully planned beforehand by an organization of Croat terrorists, although the actual assassin, who lost his life in the commission of the crime, was a Macedonian who was equally rebellious against the Yugoslav Government. From the international point of view, the most ominous feature of the affair was that the assassins had been former inmates of Jánka Pusztá and had been in possession of authentic Hungarian passports.

It was inevitable that the Yugoslav Government should resent the murder and should be determined to make an issue of the asylum given by her neighbor to emigré terrorists. Italy was involved as well as Hungary, but France, intent upon effecting her reconciliation with Italy, to which Yugoslavia was also to be a party, was anxious that no extraneous issue be injected to mar her efforts. French pressure was successful in prevailing upon Yugoslavia to refrain from accusing Italy. The Yugoslavs concentrated their indignation against the Hungarians.

On November 22 the Yugoslav Government delivered a note of protest to M. Joseph Avenol, the French Secretary-General of the League of Nations. The Yugoslav note was strongly worded and flatly accused Hungarian officials of connivance in the crime of Marseilles: "The results of the investigation conducted after the assassination of H.M. King Alexander of Yugoslavia



and the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, M. Louis Barthou, at Marseilles have demonstrated that this criminal act was organized and executed with the participation of those terrorist elements who had taken refuge in Hungary and who have continued to benefit in that country from the same complicity as before, and it is only thanks to this complicity that the odious deed of Marseilles could have been perpetrated. . . . The facilities and the protection enjoyed by the criminals on Hungarian soil during the long and detailed preparation are almost beyond belief." Yugoslavia called upon the Council "to re-establish the confidence in international justice and morality which the tragic events of Marseilles have seriously shaken. It is absolutely necessary that the responsibility which has been incurred be denounced before the highest organ of the international community, for there would be no greater danger to peace and good international relations than the repressed resentment of a people at having been the victim, in the person of its most glorious chief, of criminal acts for which those responsible could escape a just punishment."

General Gömbös retaliated in a public statement in which he attacked Yugoslavia for "leveling accusations against Hungary without a detailed knowledge of the affair and on the basis of pretended proofs which are incapable of verification. . . . The Hungarian Government solemnly protests against the Yugoslav action and resents the accusation of complicity in the murder. As the Hungarian Government considers European peace endangered by the behavior of the Yugoslav Government, it desires the League of Nations to undertake a prompt and thorough-going investigation of the affair." A formal note

of the same tenor was delivered to the Secretary-General on November 24.

In a supplementary memorandum of seventy-eight pages submitted on November 28, the Yugoslav Government set forth numerous details of its charges against Hungary, of which the gravamen was that Hungary persisted in feigning ignorance concerning the activities of the terrorists and refused to bring them to justice despite ample evidence furnished to the Hungarian police by the Yugoslav authorities. Dr. Tibor Eckhardt, the Hungarian delegate to the League Assembly, replied by charging that the information furnished by Yugoslavia was full of inaccuracies, that Hungary could not be held responsible for crimes of Croat refugees who were to be found scattered in every state of Europe and in America, and that the murder had been planned in Yugoslavia itself.

Yugoslavia had a good case; but it was to be badly compromised by her own bungling stupidity. For on the eve of the discussion of the Yugoslav complaint before the Council of the League, the Yugoslav Government initiated certain steps which put it in a very unfavorable light and at the same time played into the hands of the Hungarians, for it gave the latter an opportunity to raise the problem of the oppressed Hungarian minorities in dramatic form. On December 5 the Yugoslav authorities suddenly began deporting Hungarians who had neglected to acquire Yugoslav citizenship. On a few hours' notice, hundreds of Hungarian peasants were routed out of their homes, bundled into special trains, and unceremoniously shipped across the frontier to Hungary, where they arrived in various stages of exhaustion, bewilderment and fright. Peasants living on the Hunga-

rian side of the border were reported as being in an ugly mood, and their tempers were further exacerbated by night forays into Hungarian territory said to be conducted by bands of Yugoslav irregulars. The tension was such that for a time observers were in momentary fear of a disastrous clash. The Hungarian Government, while taking every precaution to avert such an eventuality, for which it was ill prepared, none the less saw to it that the crude actions of the Yugoslav authorities received full publicity in the world's press, with appropriate embellishments. Prince Paul, the Chief Regent of Yugoslavia, who had been visiting London to attend the wedding of his sister-in-law, Princess Marina, to the Duke of Kent, returned to Belgrade on December 8. On the following day the expulsions were abruptly stopped, although not before some three thousand Hungarians had been deported. The Prince Regent had seen the adverse effect of the Yugoslav measures on the public opinion of foreign countries, and he angrily reprimanded his cabinet for botching the affair.

## VI

On December 7 the dispute between Yugoslavia and Hungary came before the League Council in a tense atmosphere. Charges and counter-charges were hurled back and forth. All the issues that had already been raised were hashed and rehashed. Dr. Eckhardt, on Hungary's behalf, played up the Yugoslav expulsions to the limit in order to distract attention from the terrorist question, and took advantage of the loophole it afforded to inject into the argument the question of treaty revision. Yugoslavia was vigorously supported by her two allies of the Little

Entente, Czechoslovakia and Rumania. But both France and Italy, though formally backing the causes of their respective protégés, exerted every effort behind the scenes to moderate the asperity of the disputants and to avert an open break. For the menace of Hitler had made the two Latin powers anxious to effect a mutual *rapprochement*, and they were irked that a Balkan quarrel threatened to undo all their good work. "In this grave debate France is on Yugoslavia's side," said M. Pierre Laval, the French Foreign Minister. But he followed up this reassurance with a veiled admonition to Yugoslavia couched in the form of a laudation. "With a sangfroid that has compelled the respect of all, with moving dignity Yugoslavia has faced misfortune. She has, with a calmness that has not been belied, that must not be belied, given proof of her strength and unity. And Europe has realized that the integrity of the Yugoslav state is necessary to peace. . . . Though her patriotism has been stricken to the heart, she has subdued her grief and has not sought, as did others twenty years ago, to take the law into her own hands. She has turned to Geneva; she awaits our decision. Nothing could better symbolize the progress that has been accomplished in international life; nothing could better manifest the firm determination of the Yugoslav Government to be the faithful champion of this progress."

Baron Pompeo Aloisi, the Italian delegate, adopted a similar attitude toward Hungary: formal support accompanied by a moderating influence. He paid tribute to Hungary's pride and sense of justice and expressed confidence that she would be vindicated, but added that "revisionism is not terrorism; one excludes the other."



Under the pressure of France and Italy, an agreement was finally reached on December 10, and was embodied in a resolution adopted unanimously by the Council. As usually happens in such cases, it was a compromise. It refrained from accusing the Hungarian Government of direct complicity. It asserted that the Council was of the opinion that "certain Hungarian authorities may have assumed, at any rate through negligence, certain responsibilities relative to acts having connection with the preparation of the Marseilles crime," but took the sting out of this censure with a statement that it was convinced of the good will of the Hungarian Government to take at once "appropriate punitive action in the case of any of its authorities whose culpability may have been established," and requested Hungary "to communicate to the Council the measures it takes to this effect." The investigation and punishment of official negligence or complicity within her borders was thus left in the hands of Hungary, and her national pride was not humbled. Both Yugoslavia and Hungary concurred in this solution of the quarrel, and the world breathed more easily as it sidestepped still another war.

In irritating situations of this kind the League of Nations serves a useful function in acting as a safety valve through which excited disputants can let off steam under the moderating influence of neutral powers. In this sense the debates before the League Council may be said to provide what William James called a moral equivalent for war. According to Dr. Beneš, the Czechoslovak Foreign Minister, had King Alexander's assassination taken place before the League had come into existence, "War between Yugoslavia and Hungary would have been a dolorous

and horrible reality." It still remains to be seen whether the League could be equally effective in handling a dispute between two major powers, when it would be more difficult for neutral countries to exercise a moderating influence upon angry passions.

## VII

But though the latest crisis between Hungary and her neighbors has thus been surmounted without resort to war, nothing is to be gained by blinking the fact that no progress has been made in actually exorcising the underlying causes of discord. Hungary still clamors for revision. The Little Entente is still adamant in its opposition to any concessions; if anything, their hearts have been hardened by Hungary's stubborn persistence. "The revisionists would not be satisfied with minor frontier rectifications," asserted Dr. Beneš on December 14. "Their aim is to gain large territories. . . . I can not believe in the possibility of peaceable revision, since the aim of revisionism is to destroy the present status of Central Europe."

Revisionism, however, remains the be-all and end-all of Hungarian foreign policy. As long as this is so, Hungary must continue to be one of the danger spots of Europe. But without the support of some major power she can do nothing. So she continues her restless search for some potential ally who will lend aid to her revisionist claims. For this reason the Hungarians have looked askance at the recent reconciliation between Italy and France. This development seems to involve a *rap-prochement* between Italy and Yugoslavia which can only be effected by Italy's withdrawing her support from Hungary's claims. If this takes place,

Hungary will tend to draw closer to Germany.

There have of late been some diplomatic activities which may not be without significance as foreshadowing a re-orientation of Hungarian foreign policy. The Hungarians are overlooking no possible ally, and in addition to the lines they have already run out to Germany and Italy, they have recently been seeking to improve their relations with Poland. Colonel von Papen, the German Minister to Austria, had a secret interview with General Gömbös at Budapest on September 29, and Gömbös followed this up with a visit to Warsaw on October 19. At about this time, the Hungarian press remarked on the desirability of establishing a common frontier with Poland—a project which could only be effectuated at the expense of Czechoslovakia. The Polish press reciprocated by complacently recalling that centuries ago the Poles and Magyars had fought as brothers in arms against the Czechs. On November 5 Gömbös journeyed to Rome, obviously to sound out Mussolini on the extent to which Italy is prepared to continue her support of Hungary. A visit by Gömbös to Berlin has been hinted at for the near future. While it is as yet impossible to gauge the true significance of all these comings and goings, they will bear watching. In view of the close relations that are already believed to obtain between Germany and Poland,

these activities may presage the formation of a German-Polish-Hungarian bloc. It must not be forgotten that all three countries cherish the notion of expanding territorially at the expense of Czechoslovakia, which is practically surrounded by them, and a plan for the partition of that country may well constitute a bond of union between them.

It is, however, too early to say how the powers will ultimately line up. The Central European situation is made enormously complicated through the fact that so many countries are trying to carry water upon both shoulders. France is striving to consolidate her relations with Italy without alienating Yugoslavia. Italy is seeking to effect a *rapprochement* with Yugoslavia without losing her hold over Hungary. Hungary is jockeying to preserve good relations with both Italy and Germany, though these two countries are at daggers' points over the fate of Austria. Germany hesitates to commit herself to an unqualified support of Hungarian aspirations as long as there is any likelihood that Yugoslavia, resentful of the Franco-Italian *rapprochement*, may be detached from France and persuaded to enter the German camp. With so many countries working at cross-purposes in this gigantic diplomatic chess game, nobody can be sure what kind of a political omelet will finally be served up to delight or to horrify the world. One can only wait and see.





# Gloomy Old Party

BY NORTON MCGIFFIN

*Who believes that the Republicans are finished under their present name, but may have an excellent chance if they change it*

THE many doctors who have been anxiously waiting at the bedside of the Grand Old Pachyderm are perhaps wondering if there is any truth in the ancient African superstition that elephants never die. They hope the legend has some substantial basis in fact because it is going to be a long hard winter for the *jefe-politicos* of the Republican party if the animal turns up its toes.

Already the bald mahatma of Democracy, James A. Farley, has predicted the demise of the official opposition. A host of New Deal orators, in whom the wish is undoubtedly father to the thought, see in the Republican party a Humpty Dumpty so badly battered and scattered that the pieces can never again be firmly fitted into place. The master minds of the Democratic organization pray for the demolition of Republicanism, the whirling dervishes of the Rooseveltian Utopia likewise long for its destruction, and it is safe to assert that a large and ever growing number of those who still claim allegiance to the formerly Grand but now Gloomy Old Party are convinced by the recent drubbing that its political usefulness has ended.

The Republican chieftains, including that hardy perennial, Senator William E. Borah, are making much of the fact that the off-year elections just past saw the party of Abraham Lincoln cast 13,522,975 ballots, increasing its percentage of the total vote to forty-five. The theory that the only way the party can go from the debacle of 1932 is up no doubt accounts for the chuckling chirps of optimism which are beginning to be heard throughout the land. Political realists will get cold comfort from the election figures. Senator Arthur H. Vandenberg may rejoice in the reflection that the party might have done worse, but abler men than he have had their vision distorted, their judgment warped, by roseate dreams of occupying the White House. The Wolverine solon's opinion on the subject of Republican prospects for the future must be discounted inasmuch as he has been prominently "mentioned" as available for a presidential nomination two years hence.

It is true that a large percentage of the electorate stood in the Republican trenches this past November and battled manfully, resisting to the end the blandishments of Mr. Farley, the gifts

of Santa Claus. Nevertheless, the G.O.P. leaders are afflicted with a myopic vision and a Pollyanna complex if they affect to see party regeneration in the near future. The Democratic or New Deal vote percentage was slashed from fifty-seven in 1932 to 54.6 in 1934, an unimportant recession of the tide which commenced to flow powerfully in the direction of economic radicalism two years ago. To all practical intents and purposes, Mr. Farley's cohorts are entrenched in the post offices for a long time to come.

One interesting feature of the 1934 election was the grim and machine-like regularity with which the storm troopers of Democracy mowed down opposition in the States which helped Grant take Richmond and marched with Sherman from Atlanta to the sea. When rock-ribbed Republican Pennsylvania spurns the able Senator David A. Reed and chooses twenty-three Democratic Congressmen from a State total of thirty-four, there is indubitably something rotten in Denmark. A generation which knows not Penrose has been conceived within the very shadow of the blast furnaces which belch smoky hosannas in praise of Joseph R. Grundy's established order.

Farther west Ohio and Illinois and Iowa, States which contributed countless regiments to fight for the freeing of the slave, deserted the faith of their fathers with their corn-hog allotment cheques grasped firmly in hands which have grown calloused during long years of agricultural depression. Wisconsin, which sent the Iron Brigade to stand like a stone wall at Gettysburg, has turned on the Republican party of Matt Carpenter and John C. Spooner. Minnesota, incurably loyal to the G.O.P. in the days of Norwegian

Knute Nelson, has long since followed strange economic gods into Farmer-Labor radicalism. Oregon, the commonwealth of the Free Soilers, saw its Republican candidate for governor run a poor third in 1934.

The Democratic pluralities in 1934 were evenly distributed from Maine to Washington, from Michigan to the Mason-Dixon line. Below that historic boundary, the slaughter of the Republican innocents was terrific. Texas which cast 376,000 votes for Hoover in 1928 gave the 1934 G.O.P. gubernatorial choice a measly 3,710. Tennessee managed to reelect two Republican Congressmen and three mountain counties in Georgia, still defiantly loyal to the memory of Abraham Lincoln, voted their usual sentiments. Throughout the length and breadth of the Deep South, however, the one-party system was more firmly buttressed than ever before, rooted in the immutable muck of partisan prejudice against the Republican organization which bears a label hateful since the days of Reconstruction.

## II

Political America, like all Gaul, is divided into three parts. There is, or rather was, the Republican East, the section which now sends Peter G. Gerrys and David I. Walshes to speak its sentiments at Washington. There is the Solid South which kicked over the Democratic traces in 1928 and has been repenting in sackcloth and ashes ever since. And there is the independently minded and economically unorthodox West which threw up its broad-brimmed hat for Teddy and wiped tears from its hardy cheeks when Bryan spoke. To win an election, two of these three sections must be firmly



knit together in political unity. The Democratic Wilson did it in 1916, ally-ing the agricultural West and South against the industrial East. The Republican Harding followed suit in 1920, uniting the East and West to the dis-comfiture of the Southern Bourbons.

When we consider the campaign issues which won three political campaigns preceding the Roosevelt-Hoover fracas of 1932, we are forced to marvel that the Republican party ever retained any of its ancient virility, that aggressiveness which enabled it to dominate the Federal government for sixty years after the end of the Civil War. Carping critics would say that the party has been bereft of men and issues during the past fourteen years. In 1920, the German and Polish and Irish voters of the Middle West were scared into voting against James M. Cox for fear he would take us into the League of Nations and help perfidious Albion harm their respective homelands in the Council chamber at Geneva. Four years later silk-shirted laborers in the steel mills were being encouraged to "thank God for Coolidge." In 1928, the nomination of Alfred E. Smith goaded millions of hard liquor drinkers to cast their ballots for Prohibition. The "chicken in every pot" theory of economics was also being duly explained to the boot blacks and waitresses who had been buying Insull stocks on an exceedingly small margin.

A lot of water has flowed under the bridge since those days of prosperity. Republican leaders in Congress have unfortunately lived to see the enormous majorities of 1928 melt like spring snow in the Sierras. During the Hoover administration, the hollow shell of what was once a vital and vigorous political organism continued to exist,

but the heart had almost ceased to diffuse life blood to its many withered limbs. The election of a Democratic House in 1930 revived memories of 1910 and caused political commentators to draw the deadly parallel between Messrs. Taft and Hoover. Mr. Roosevelt's predecessor, unable even as was the late Chief Justice to unite successfully the industrial East and the agricultural West, went down into inevitable defeat in 1932.

Only the most Tory Republicans will deny that the battle was lost long before the Waterloo of two years ago, long before the Old Guard died but did not surrender, lost when the generals of the party lost touch with the buck privates in the rear ranks. For the past decade, the rugged individualists at the top have withdrawn into the sacred confines of the Union League Club and refused to recognize political realities. Not only have they contemptuously ignored the immigrants who learned to vote the Democratic ticket while working in the steel mills of Pittsburgh, they have likewise highbatted the simple sons of toil who inherited their Western quarter sections from veterans of the Union army.

The industrialists of the East, the stuffed shirts who tossed \$10,000 cheques into the Republican campaign pot for favors duly acknowledged and received, long ago refused to see the storm signals of discontent which were hoisted west of Ohio in 1921. The agricultural Middle West was depressed a decade before the crash of '29, but the leaders of the Republican Party were not aware of the decreased buying power among the nation's 30,000,000 ruralites. Signs of moral decay were noted long before the roof fell in on Mr. Hoover. The Republican leader-

ship was spiritually bankrupt in 1920 when supposedly smart politicians who felt that "any man" could win gathered in that smoke-filled Chicago hotel room and gave Warren G. Harding to the party and the nation.

Then came the saturnalia of folly at Washington in the first two Harding years, the high carnival of the boodlers, the popping of corks in the Little Green House on K Street, the Teapot Domes and the shameful sale of political influence to the highest bidder. The Republican leaders could no longer talk the homespun language of Abraham Lincoln. They had utterly lost the power to formulate policies the average voter could understand.

### III

For the past decade the chief requisite of a Republican senatorial candidate in the East has been the possession of a "barrel." The Hamilton F. Keans and William M. Butlers and Joseph R. Grundys of the party have had large-sized fortunes they were not averse to using for the furtherance of their own and other political candidacies. They have been eminently respectable and utterly unapproachable. They have been gentlemen farmers, the fox-hunting Tory type of squire who is amazed to learn that the lower classes have white skins, akin to the ancient patroons of Knickerbocker days. These Republican magnates have kept control of the party organization by the simple expedient of financing its every campaign. Harding and Coolidge and Hoover were elected to office mainly because the various chairmen of the Republican National Committee had free and easy access to men worth millions. Only John J. Raskob rivaled them in the ability to tap this pipe line into the

huge treasuries of the plutocratic few.

So long as the accumulation of dollars was the chief aim and desire of the masses, so long as they were content to collect hundreds while the "big shots" amassed millions, the Republican party was riding high, if for a fall. The moment the speculative house of cards toppled, the day the stock market started on that deadly zoom from the heights to the depths, the organization folded up like an accordion, its leaders bleating piteously and begging their irate fellow countrymen to sit tight and desist from rocking the boat.

As the twilight of depression deepened, the gloom on the faces of the Republican leaders was painful to contemplate. Few of them had ever read a book on economics, an illiteracy which was shared with their Democratic opponents. The millionaires who contributed to their campaign funds, the industrial magnates who thought that production could outrun consumption forever, had spent their spare time ridiculing and deriding the British relief system. The Deity was praised because the dole did not exist in the United States. Deliberately confusing unemployment insurance with cash relief, they poisoned the minds of an American electorate easily misled by slogans, they conducted an insane policy of propaganda against the English capitalists who were taking sensible measures to safeguard and preserve the profit system.

After three long hard years of depression, the thought that this drab situation might exist for some time to come percolated slowly into the consciousness of the Republican high command. Belated efforts to look and act like champions of the underdog were then made. The Reconstruction Fi-



nance Corporation and various farm loan and credit agencies then came into being, created to help check the downward spiral of deflation. A halting and confused system of Federal relief for the unemployed was grudgingly established, all progressive steps stoutly opposed by a large segment of the Republican party which never read the newspapers. Unfortunately, the millions in the bread lines could not appreciate the constitutional niceties of their arguments. As a result, the Democratic propagandists crawled out from underneath the woodwork and, with an unabashed demagoguery which was the admiration and despair of their sweating opponents, diabolically charged the G.O.P. with being deaf to the cries of the starving masses.

In view of the fact that the Republicans cast forty-five per cent of the popular vote in 1934, ultra-conservative party leaders like Bertrand Snell of New York are commencing to leave their shell holes and predict that everything is going to be just dandy. The idea that the party can return to power merely by sitting tight and waiting for the Roosevelt Administration to make mistakes seems a grotesque one to any who take a realistic view of the American political scene. The Snell theory, borrowing a favorite figure of speech from President Roosevelt, is for the Republican team to kick on first down and wait for the breaks, praying for the safety man in the White House to fumble the ball. If the gentleman from Potsdam will pardon the criticism, grid-iron contests may be won that way, but not elections. Something more than a "safety first" attitude of watchful waiting is demanded by an electorate which is more highly articulate and emotional than it has ever been before.

It is true that the Republican party, all things considered, held its lines in remarkable fashion during the recent campaign, but the resistance came almost entirely from the doughboys in the trenches. The high command of the G.O.P. was picked off on all fronts. Kean, Reed, Fess, Robinson, Patterson, from New Jersey to Missouri and points west, all fell before the withering barrage of Democracy. Compared with the Republican percentage of the popular vote, the party's representation in Congress is absolutely pitiable. Less than twenty-five per cent of the Senate adheres to the G.O.P., less than twenty-eight per cent of the House.

#### IV

Those conservatives who feel that the Republican party has no excuse for existing may, but need not, shrink from the responsibility of inventing its successor. The Whig organization refused to face the living issue of the hour and went the way of the Federalists. It is considered expensive to build a new party from the grass roots and introduce it to the voters, yet many radical groups in the Middle West have not hesitated to promote such organizations. The Greenback, the Populist, the La Follette Progressive party, all came into being without benefit of millionaires. A new conservative party has a set of financial angels waiting to receive it with open arms, the American Liberty League which has been collecting its devaluated dollars with such deliberation. It would seem that some of that group's funds might well be diverted for the formation of an organization whose leadership would appeal primarily to that great middle class of American voters which detests Wall Street and Moscow with equal fury.

Where would a new and progressive conservative party get its recruits? Mainly from Republican ranks. In addition a large segment of the Democratic voters could be easily seduced from the standard of an organization which is more Rooseveltian than Jeffersonian. The antics of the Brain Trust have not set well in the South. Those who follow the intellectual leadership of Carter Glass abound in every Dixie community. Because of the social stigma attached to the name Republican, they have been loath to leave the Democratic party. A new organization with a more attractive label would entice them into making a joyous exit from a group which includes the Tugwells and Sinclairs and Ickeses and others of the professorial pure in heart.

The Republican rank and file would be glad to join a new conservative party. Unlike their leaders, they have everything to gain and nothing to lose. The few remaining jobholders of the G.O.P. would of course fight against it, tooth and nail, but what is left of the Republican party can not long be held together merely by the cohesive power of public plunder. It can not continue to function only for the purpose of electing Republican governors in Vermont and Delaware. Those who claim that the name is still politically effective need only look at the mournful results of the last election to realize how deeply it has sunk in public estimation. Not even Pennsylvania can be held in line for the party these days.

Almost all political commentators agree that there is a distinct need for an intelligent and critical opposition to the national Administration. A party in power, especially one which is in a position to placate various sections of the electorate with substantial subsidies, be-

comes a menace to democracy without the corrective influence of honest if slightly waspish adversaries. The Republicans can never function in that capacity. In the popular mind, their party remains the bulwark of the Mitchells, the Insulls, the Dohertys, the Dohenys, the Daughertys, the Falls. It sponsored a phony prosperity, it gave hypocritical lip service to a Prohibition policy which patently roused the animosity of millions, it acted for the past decade as a little brother to the Wall Street magicians, it is anathema to the masses who have forgotten, if they ever knew, that the Republican party was created of, by and for working men who resented the unfair competition of slave labor.

The Democratic party today can not get any constructive criticism from the gentlemen of the G.O.P. because so few of them survive as Congressional leaders. At least half of those who made the grade last November are Republicans of the Cutting type. Their idea of a proper cure for the existing depression is the creation of a public works programme which will increase by millions the number of those who draw their annual stipends from the Federal government. They view with utter complacency the complete break-down of private industry in competition with alphabetical activity, they long for bigger and better EPICs.

It is quite probable that the average Republican would mark his ballot as gladly for Carter Glass in 1936 as he would for any one of the surviving G.O.P. Senators whose moral and intellectual calibre is so decidedly inferior to that of the Virginian. A party which could absorb the millions of Republican voters into its ranks, securing its leadership from that virile Democratic group which includes Alfred E.



Smith, Newton D. Baker, Bainbridge Colby and Albert C. Ritchie, would make a definite and lasting impression upon American politics. It might not win in 1936, but the atmosphere would be cleared for a clean-cut fight four years later in which a conservative party of liberal outlook could accept the socialistic challenge, stealing enough of Mr. Roosevelt's political clothes to beat Mr. Farley at his own game. Then we should see where we stand.

## Now All Within My Household Sleep

BY ROBERT P. TRISTRAM COFFIN

Now all within my household keep  
The strange, sad carnival of sleep.

They move between the half-seen faces  
And the bottomless dark spaces.

Too deep in feeling for any mirth,  
One foot on air and one on earth.

Too far down to dance or sing,  
Close to the breath of death's dark wing.

A sun might blossom on every tree  
And they not lift their eyes to see.

They go, and do not know at all  
Whither. They see cities fall.

I see by their faces how they are;  
I might be gazing at a star

For any pattern of sure kind.  
They are drifting free of mind,

Free of everything save fear,  
And that forever vague, unclear.

But day will come, and they will rise  
Smiling people, and have eyes.

# Can China Stem the Communist Tide?

BY GERHARD HIRSCHFELD

*Economic factors make the answer a disturbing one*

IF POVERTY is the cross upon the back of capitalism, economic misery and despair are the Eden in which Communism raises its finest fruits. Invariably, the Bible of the Bolsheviks has its largest sales and its most devoted following at those times and in those countries where hopes are at their lowest level. Communism took over the German government when a lost War, a tremendous strain during the preceding four years and an absolutely hopeless outlook for the future drove the capitalists, the aristocrats, the monarchists and several other "ists" to shelter, leaving the political arena to the Socialists and their brethren on the extreme Left.

Communism swept Italy shortly after the great conflict for a definite reason: the government failed in the adjustment of post-War difficulties, failed to provide for the millions of soldiers, failed to steer the country's economic course securely into peacetime requirements. Thus was created uncertainty, insecurity, poverty—a fertile field for Communism. Soviet Russia is, of course, the outstanding example of the soil on which Marxism flourishes.

The countries of Latin America have strong and active Communist parties, and have had them ever since their starving masses discovered that Lenin was not speaking only to the Russian *kulak*. And now China, though of course she is not a new member of the Temple of Bolshevism since her Red hordes have been preaching the word of Marx with fire and sword for more than a decade. If one is to believe the communiqués of government generals, the Communists have been defeated a hundred times, they have been driven underground and eliminated altogether. Yet, here they are, millions upon millions of them roaming the country, destroying property, ransacking villages and killing the population. Apparently, there are two versions as to the true course of the civil war.

Communism in China is undoubtedly alive and growing out of its baby togs. It will keep growing because the economic factors that make for it are steadily developing into a phase of deterioration and economic decomposition which is the true Paradise for the Adams and the Eves of the world brotherhood union.



China is, and has been for the last four thousand years, a predominantly agricultural country. It is true that in some cities along the coast manufacturing has been developing rapidly. Nevertheless, about eighty per cent of the country's immense population of 450,000,000 people live on the land. Their holdings, which are either rented or owned, are so small that a single crop failure means the difference between bare subsistence for another season and complete ruin. This goes for normal times.

Today, with the country in the turmoil of factional disputes and civil war, in the grip of scores of war lords, here pillaged by Red bandits and there plundered by federal troops, the peasant's lot has become insufferable—for all but the stoic pupils of Buddha. The return from their yearly toil has been going to whoever happened to be in possession of the towns and villages—and it made little difference whether the plate was passed around in the name of the government treasury or of some warlord. It could even have been the Japanese for all that it mattered.

To understand the plight of the peasants, one should remember that about half of them do not own the land; on top of their other difficulties, they have to pay rent. The average peasant family consists of five or six members, and the average annual income per family is, believe it or not, fifty dollars or about nine dollars per person, translated into American money. Just how the warlords manage to squeeze anything at all out of the poor peasant is hard to understand in view of the fact that in a normal year only about one-quarter of the peasant population are able to avoid going into debt while the remaining three-quarters spend on the average ten per

cent in excess of their income. What do they do, then, to meet the warlords and the tax collectors half-way? They are forced to sell or mortgage their crops even before the seed is in the ground.

Under these circumstances, bankruptcy becomes an event of monotonous regularity. What is left by the oppressor is taken from the farmer by floods, droughts, plant diseases and pests, caused by locusts and other insects. In addition about two million farmers have been killed by the marauding bands, another ten million were driven from their lands; perhaps the same number have been pressed into military service either by the government or the Communists, and finally, millions of the more active and venturesome have sought a kinder fate in the neighboring Manchukuo. Such is the rural picture of modern China.

## II

The internal chaos has led to an economic anomaly of truly disastrous proportions. This country, whose proportion of population engaged in agriculture is the highest in the world, still fails to produce enough rice and cotton and wheat for her own requirements. In 1933, China bought food from abroad amounting to no less than a quarter of her total imports, and this excludes large quantities of sugar which were smuggled in. The imports of rice, wheat and cotton balance the proceeds of about two-thirds of all exports. As for the export trade, it is obvious that the domestic situation has not exactly favored increased production. Other factors have added to the handicap of lack of political stability. Manchuria, one of the best outlets, was lost to Japan, which after the annexation of this large state increased her exports

within eight months by about 100,000,000 yen; this trade volume would otherwise have gone to China. The world depression, of course, accounts for a large proportion of the loss of the principal exports. Then again, variations in quality of silk and tea are a great handicap which could hardly be removed without an organization for grading, testing and marketing.

Thus, in the first eleven months of 1934, China's unfavorable trade balance reached the total of \$466,000,000, with imports amounting to \$958,000,000, and exports to \$492,000,000. The total trade volume of \$1,424,000,000 shows a decided drop when compared with \$1,815,000,000 for the corresponding period of 1933, a loss of more than twenty per cent. China, like many another agricultural country, imports more than she exports; in this, she is no different from such countries as Peru or Colombia a few years ago. But these South American countries have seen to it that, first, they produced within their own borders an increasing portion of their food requirements, secondly, that they emphasized the production of special products, as, for instance, oil in Venezuela, cotton in Peru, coffee in Colombia, and finally, that they reduced imports as much as possible by establishing their own manufacturing industries. In this way, a number of predominantly agricultural countries have worked up to a point of economic stability where in spite of undeveloped or little developed sources and industrial facilities they actually have a favorable trade balance.

Why can not China follow in their tracks? Some of the reasons which handicap the natural economic development of this huge territory have been given above. The exploitation of the

farmer does away with his profit. The only incentive left is in making a living, no matter how meagre. The peasant can not be expected to understand the notion of profitability. Profits are taken away from him even before they are made. Hence, it is not likely that China will in the near future produce more of her own food requirements unless the profit incentive is restored to the peasant. Other obstacles prevent unification and specialization of production.

The interior of China is torn and disrupted into a great number of small production centres, if one really can call them by that name. Take, for example, the production of wheat in only one province, Honan, and see how prices differ even between the villages. The index used is based on January, 1933, as 100; the year is 1933:

*January April July October*

County of Wuchih .	100	194	107	111
County of Chenliu .	100	67	60	54
County of Jungyang .	100	132	76	73
County of Nanchao .	100	80	30	40
County of Yuhsien .	100	86	66	60

The table makes it clear that whereas the price of wheat rises nearly 100 per cent in one county during April, in nearby villages it drops during the same time by more than thirty per cent. By what method or system the price scale is regulated, if at all, I do not profess to know. But it would seem that the example is duplicated in many other provinces, as well as in other products, for instance, cotton in the province of Shansi. The same indices as they apply to wheat are used in the following table:

*January April July October*

County of Kwangling . . . .	100	163	174	112
County of Shihhsien .	100	100	70	36
County of Chiehshiu .	100	91	64	66
County of Pinglu . .	100	143	107	84
County of Juicheng .	100	98	44	33



The interior prices of cotton are just as irregular and unsteady as those of wheat. In July they went up to 174, a rise of seventy-four per cent, in the county of Kwangling, and in the same month they dropped fifty-six per cent in the county of Juicheng. In view of this crazy situation in the interior, it may be readily understood why rice and wheat and cotton, the chief products of a tremendous agricultural country, have to be imported from abroad, instead of flooding foreign markets.

### III

Furthermore, there is the communications system, which because of the tremendous territorial expanse is among the first and most important prerequisites of economic development. It so happens that China has the advantage of an exceptional system of water transport. Her extended coastline serves the maritime towns where the greatest economic progress has been made; her rivers, with canals acting as feeders, serve certain parts of the interior, and, since they flow west and east, should be an excellent aid to ocean traffic. However, river and canal traffic is extremely slow, and it has been found that transport by road offers much greater opportunity for development. But while much road construction has recently been undertaken, it is hardly more than a drop in the bucket, again considering the vast amount of territory involved. Besides, roads are a poor substitute for railways as the framework of a system of communications. Railway construction therefore remains the principal problem.

The present railway system is thoroughly inadequate for China's needs. It comprises some 7,000 miles of track of which only about 5,000 miles are main

line. Practically all the railways were built between 1904 and 1911, chiefly with foreign capital; it is no wonder that their condition is deteriorating and their equipment becoming defective. The area covered is very small; there are in fact hardly more than two main railway systems running north and south. Enormous regions, like Szechuen, are not served at all. Why are not more railroads being built? The first answer is that there is no capital for railway construction available. Foreign capital refuses to come in as long as political instability makes any sort of investment a hazard. In addition, mismanagement and top-heavy indebtedness are not precisely attractions to foreign investors.

In the last twenty years passenger traffic receipts have gone up considerably; but those from goods traffic—which is the crucial point in economic development—have remained stationary. Fifteen years ago the ratio of operating expenses to operating revenue was fifty-four per cent; five years ago it had risen to sixty-five per cent; today it is even higher. The increase in personnel, often unnecessary, and in administrative and operating expenses largely accounts for the decline in profitability. Total railway indebtedness amounts at present to a billion dollars, of which three-quarters represent capital, and the balance interest arrears; two-thirds of the loans are in default. Of the total loans eighty-five per cent are foreign and fifteen per cent domestic. Thus, railway development offers little hope for the near future. With greater political stability and a settlement of management problems, there is little doubt that foreign capital would be forthcoming again, and that other capital would follow in the wake

of economic enterprise thus created. But is there no indication of railway reorganization, nor of greater political stability.

## IV

Retarded economic development has naturally caused increasing indebtedness in China. Farmers are in debt, railroads are in debt, foreign trade creates additional debts every year and, last but by no means least, the government has crowned all these achievements by creating its own record debt which tops all others. The whole of the public debt of the Chinese government is estimated at about \$4,500,000,000 which consists of:

Foreign debt, regularly served	\$692,000,000
Domestic debt regularly served	894,000,000
Boxer indemnity . . . . .	380,000,000
Foreign and domestic debt, on which service is sus- pended . . . . .	1,650,000,000
Railway loans . . . . .	880,000,000
	<hr/>
	\$4,496,000,000

This debt is steadily increasing because under present circumstances it is next to impossible to create a balanced budget. Take, for example, the 1933-34 budget, with expenditures of \$830,000,000. Of this total, only about \$9,000,000 went to business, industry and transport, or a bit over one per cent. In contrast, military expenditures swallowed more than half, and service on the above loans required another twenty-seven per cent. Obviously, the government is in no position to further the economic development of the country. Besides, it faces difficulties in obtaining new loans from abroad unless it is willing to cut down the item of military expenditures, at the same time transferring interest on old and new loans.

Here a word about the American sil-

ver policy. A false conception about the meaning of silver to the Chinese people must be corrected. In the first place, the standard currency of seventy-five per cent of the people is not silver: they are much too poor to count their worldly wealth in silver; they exchange copper and bronze coins, and it is probably true that most of them never have even seen silver and would not know what it was if they stumbled across a silver coin in the rice fields. Secondly, the rest of the Chinese do use silver as their currency, but they do not produce it. If they want it, they have to buy it. Hence, if the price of silver rises—as it did in consequence of Washington's silver policy—the Chinese obtain a better price on their holdings. In other words, their currency turns into a commodity. They export it. Silver exports in the first eleven months of 1934 amounted to no less than \$263,000,000.

This immense drain on the country's silver supply caused the Finance Minister to impose an embargo on silver shipments, along with a special tax and an export duty. But this has not stopped the outflow of silver; it merely transformed official exports into smuggled exports. There is no indication of a let-up in silver exports. This, of course, will diminish the Chinese stocks, and the alternative will remain of either "going off silver" or buying new silver stocks, at a considerably higher price. In neither case will there be any gain for China's trade and commerce.

## V

This completes—in miniature form—the picture of modern China. It is a picture of extreme poverty and, what is worse, of a distorted national economy. By far the best chance for economic recovery lies in the development



of domestic consumption and buying power. Right at home there are hundreds of millions of Chinese without the barest necessities of life. They would represent a stupendous potential market if they were given a chance to make a little profit with which to buy the basic requirements as well as the little conveniences of life.

For a number of years, Soviet Russia left her masses starving, too. But instead of giving bread and flour to the poor, they shipped wheat and other agricultural products to foreign markets and received railroad material and machinery in return with which the government gradually built up the country's economy and industry. Not so with China. Things are imported which should be exported; and export goods are not used to import the things China needs most: industrial equipment, rails, locomotives and so on.

The government can not move backward or forward. Instead of subsidizing the farmer, the engineer, the entre-

preneur, it pours enormous amounts of money into military enterprise, continuing a civil war which has lasted more than fifteen years and which looks as if it might last forever—for it is just as impossible to conquer Communism in China as Napoleon found it to conquer Russia. Meanwhile, foreign capital so urgently needed for the building up of a primitive country sits back and waits for the fog to lift.

These are the elements which produce the storm of Communism. Where people have nothing to lose but their poverty, where they have everything to gain, despair—the toughest opposition for any government—blossoms. The outlook is all in favor of the Bolsheviks. One may consider it merely a matter of time before Communism is organized sufficiently to attack the federal forces on a broad front with overwhelming numerical strength—and a similar matter of time before the government finds itself unable to finance its resistance.





# Behind the Tambourine

BY MARQUIS JAMES

*The romantic story of Catherine and William Booth, who began  
the Salvation Army*

A GIRL in the street jingling a tambourine, a presentable young man on your doorstep collecting old newspapers and clothing, and at Christmas-tide those free-hand representations of Santa Claus with pot and bell: by these outward signs do most of us know the Salvation Army, accepting them as visible manifestations of an endeavor that reaches into the sombre shadowlands of life affording hope and regeneration to those broken upon the wheel of adversity. We hear vaguely and approvingly of the Army's shelters for the homeless, its work in the prisons and among discharged prisoners, its hospitals and convalescent homes for unmarried mothers. We virtuously endorse its maxim that "A Man May Be Down But He's Never Out"—and leave the realization thereof to the Army.

We leave it to hands singularly competent and versatile. Behind the girl with a tambourine stand colleagues the world over—in leper camps, in remote criminal settlements including that of French Guiana, in the steaming jungles of India, the yellow plains of northern China, the heart of Africa. In eighty-six countries and colonies the Army articulates its diverse labors in eighty

tongues. Tangible wealth and property are things the Army cares least about, yet in the United States alone its holdings are valued at \$40,000,000. To such estate has grown within living memory an institution whose pioneers were stoned in London streets and imprisoned in London jails. Success prospered their efforts because they held to their goal of grappling with the substance of human misfortune rather than the shadow of it; and moreover because the spirit of the Army represents now what it represented six years ago, the translation into organization and action of one of the Nineteenth Century's most remarkable romances—the little-known love story of Catherine and William Booth.

## II

In the springtime of 1852 these two met at a tea-party. The host, an altruistically inclined London boot manufacturer named Rabbits, had heard the young man preach in a Reform Chapel of the Methodist Church. Young Booth's unschooled eloquence, his tremendous earnestness, so swayed Mr. Rabbits that after the service he sought out William and learned his story. Son of a congenital failure and remarkable



liar, who fed his starved brood on tales of a vanished family prosperity always about to be redeemed, William knew disillusionment early in life and made the intimate acquaintance of poverty in the manufacturing town of Nottingham. At thirteen the boy was apprenticed to a pawnbroker and at sixteen he began to preach in the streets. In a year he was the head of a nameless little band which included such personages as Besom Jack, the wife-beater, whom young Booth had prevailed upon to modify his ideas of the marriage relationship. At nineteen William entered the service of another pawnbroker in London and on Sundays would put a Bible in his pocket and head for the slums.

Mr. Rabbits's tea-party was a celebration of William's release from the pawnbroker whose calling William despised, although it had proved a serviceable laboratory in which to observe the spiritual and material needs of the poor—and had impressed upon the young man the affinity between the two. Mr. Rabbits had proposed to finance William for three months as a preacher. Proud of his protégé, the good man begged William to recite a soggy American poem, *The Grog-Seller's Dream*. The tall young speaker was not quite twenty-three and carelessly attired. But in a moment the hearers had forgotten that. They were conscious only of the arresting eyes, the flexible lines of a strong, thin, apperceptive face dominated by a "Wellington" nose—inherited from Booth's mother who was probably Jewish—an orator's voice, untrained, not always grammatical but always commanding.

The sentiments of the poem were accorded a mixed reception, for not all present were teetotallers, but the

speaker had left his impress—and on none so strongly as on Catherine Mumford, a comely oval-faced girl with dimples. William escorted her home and knew he was in love.

When Mr. Rabbits's bounty ended, the Reformed Methodists established William as a lay preacher. He was surprisingly successful, lionized at tea-parties and worshiped by the poor. Then the church sought to prepare its recruit for higher stations with a period of polishing at a theological college. Catherine Mumford had a hand in this, for as William's wooing proceeded she undertook to shape the destinies of her suitor. Booth had personality and a militant imagination, but Catherine was his superior in intellectual force, and she was the more level-headed and patient. William could not stick the tedium of the classroom. Thumbing a Latin grammar was not his way of preparing to alleviate suffering in the world, which to him went hand-in-hand with the extinction of sin. So he chucked the classes, swept Catherine to the altar, declined a soft church post in London and with his bride took to the road as an evangelist under the sponsorship of the Methodist New Connexion, latest of the liberal church movements.

### III

For two years they tramped the face of England, living like gypsies, often penniless, often hungry because of private generosities, but radiantly joyful in a love that had realized ten-fold every anticipation of courtship. It was a love which, like William Booth's theory of religion, declined to scorn the flesh. "How very much I should like to see you today, to hold you in my arms and look at you and cover you with

warm and earnest kisses." In a lodging house in Halifax Catherine brought their first-born into the world and caught up with her husband at his next stop.

The tour came to an end when the New Connexion terminated Booth's evangelistic work. Rivals were jealous, conservatives alarmed at his furious methods. The journeyman was weary and accepted a year's rest in the pastorate of a grimy little factory town where their second child was born. In 1861 Booth served notice on the annual Conference at Liverpool that he would withdraw from the New Connexion if his demands for a renewal of evangelism were not met. The Conference offered a compromise. Booth hesitated, turned to the visitors' gallery and questioned his wife with a glance. Catherine rose in her place and in a voice that made the rafters ring shouted, "Never!" Amid cries of "Order! Order!" William Booth waved his hat in the direction of the door and passed out, to embrace Catherine at the foot of the gallery stair.

Together they confronted the world, without a church behind them, without a settled plan, and with hardly a shilling in their pockets. To London they carried their four babies, William plunging into the slums while Catherine, the shrewd and capable manager, established herself in the drawing-rooms of the West End where a woman preacher was an oddity and hostesses were out to greet their guests with the newest thing under the sun. The wife's heart was in her husband's work which she felt she could further best by earning enough to keep the family together. When William's health broke under the strain she took his place in their chosen field. "Send me a little love-

talk," he wrote to her. This was an old plea, for he was never without one of her letters in his purse.

Three years of flailing efforts found the two evangelists with little to show in the way of achievement, no following worthy of a name, and family life a desperate improvisation. Attractive terms of surrender presented from time to time in the form of offers from the churches. The Booths declined them all. William did not criticize the churches, but more and more the conviction laid hold of him that these institutions were incapable of coping with the peculiar problems of England's poor. He saw drink-sodden, vice-ridden millions sinking deeper into the sloughs of hopelessness as the churches inspired in them feelings of derision rather than reverence. Defeat upon defeat, effort upon effort splintering in futility, only seemed to confirm the faith of William and Catherine Booth in their ability ultimately to triumph where others had failed. Failure to them meant only squaring off for a fresh start.

#### IV

One such start was made in 1864 when Booth and a little knot of followers took their stand on Mile End Waste, a dismal stretch of derelict land near Whitechapel. Their singing drew a crowd from the Vine and Blind Beggar public houses. Booth's rugged eloquence held that crowd as he brandished his umbrella and flayed Demon Rum. Part of a drunkard's psychology is a sentimental tolerance of critics of his weakness. But when the gaunt, earnest man offered the creed of Jesus Christ as a substitute for the illusory consolation of the waters of destruction some one jeered. Religion was a subject upon which Booth's auditors en-



tertained no liberal opinions. Though catcalls drowned his voice Booth spoke on. Mud, garbage, stones flew through the air. William and his band held their ground dodging and fending off missiles as best they could. Finally they retreated, the tall leader still waving his umbrella and crying out things that were unheard.

Next night he was back, only to be routed again. The night after that he returned—with the same result. In this cause or that courage is a quality that challenges admiration. A few who had flung mud at earlier meetings began to range themselves beside the preacher. Among these was an ex-pugilist who, despite William's order to turn the other cheek, remembered enough of his old profession to diminish the enthusiasm of some of the disturbers. Owners of contiguous pubs, finding that this scare-crow preacher was emptying their places, hired thugs to annoy the meetings. To meet this opposition an organization imperceptibly formed itself which Booth called the Christian Mission. Thus on Mile End Waste the Salvation Army came into being, though it was not so named until fifteen years later. The Mission attained to the dignity of a tent, then an abandoned warehouse for week-day services. Sunday services were held in a dance-hall whose normal activities were discontinued on the Sabbath by police regulation.

The spiritual reservoir upon which the embattled leader drew for inspiration was his home, into which during these turmoiled early days of the Army the eighth and last child was born. A visitor to this domicile said it reminded her of a railway station because it was so busy and so wanting in confusion, a condition largely due to the administrative ability of the mother. But father con-

tributed to the prevailing spirit of cheerfulness; in Booth's home a hearty laugh was reckoned as half a prayer. One Christmas a family celebration was planned culminating in a dinner. It was not to cost an extra penny, only a little additional work in which the family collaborated with zest. Christmas morning Booth rose early to hold a service. In his absence the house was put in festal array, the home-made presents brought out, the dinner prepared. Father returned white and drawn. He tried to admire the presents and join the children in a frolic; useless. Suddenly he burst out, "I'll never have a Christmas Day like this again! The poor have nothing but the public house!"

Nor did he, or any Booth. Next Christmas they distributed 150 plum puddings, most of them baked in the Booth oven. The famous soup kitchens followed, capturing the attention of all London.

## v

Booth had struck his stride. No longer were his enormous energies diffused into space. He fought the devil with the devil's weapons. Giving his followers bright uniforms and banners, drums, trumpets and tambourines, he bade them play and sing gay tunes. The "barracks" of his Army were by design actual rivals of the public houses—warm, well-lighted, cheerful places where piety was crammed down no man's throat. Recruits flowed to the leader's standard, and when they joined the Army they knew its terms. "Garibaldi," writes St. John Ervine, "offered his Thousand wounds and death; and got his Thousand. Booth offered half-educated or illiterate workmen and servant girls calumny and hunger and

pain and persecution and a strict obedience to their general's commands; and he got an army that went across the world."

The conquest of England was the first objective. Evangelical parties were pushed out over the roads that Catherine and William Booth knew so well. These activities spurred to fresh assaults an opposition led, from different motives, by the churches and the liquor interests. The Army's processions were the targets for garbage and dead cats. Outdoor meetings were systematically broken up. Indoor meetings were disconcerted by blowing smoke down the chimney and firing trails of gunpowder. A great outcry went up from the pious when Booth discontinued the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper because he found that even the odor of wine was a peril to converts snatched from alcoholism. The Church of England was so misled by the tide of current libel as to pronounce formally certain night services of the Army a danger to morals of young girls.

In one year 669 Salvationists, including 251 women, were knocked down and beaten, fifty-six buildings of the Army stormed and damaged, eighty-six Salvationists imprisoned. The police usually sided with the heterogeneous opposition. The Army thrived on these attacks. The devotion of Booth's followers was such that the Commanding General issued a general order against starvation when he found Salvationists contributing their infinitesimal salaries to further the Army's war chest.

The Booths were now in a position to give full reign to their flair for the audacious. Their crusade against white slavery had enlisted the aid of W. T. Stead, editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette*.

Bramwell Booth, the oldest son, and Stead made a plan to buy a girl simply to demonstrate that this could be done. In the Army's ranks was Rebecca Jarrett who had once made her living at that sort of thing. She attended to the arrangements whereby a girl was taken to a bawdy house, drugged and sold to Stead. When the editor exposed the transaction in his paper, he was arrested along with Bramwell Booth and Mrs. Jarrett, on the strength of their own admissions. Although they had actually rescued the girl from a life of immorality, technically these three had broken the law in so doing. A court freed Bramwell, but Stead and Mrs. Jarrett went to jail. Such daring gestures made countless new friends for the Army.

In 1886 William Booth came to the United States, where six years before George Scott Railson had landed at the head of an "expeditionary force" of seven "Hallelujah lasses" who dropped on their knees outside the immigration office in New York and claimed another continent for Christ. Booth was now fifty-seven, conscious of his power, and confident. Yet the fountain of his inspiration was still Catherine. "Send me love-letters," he wrote, "and particulars about yourself. What you do and what time you retire and whether you read in bed. Indeed anything about yourself, your dear self."

Always with one of his wife's letters in his pocket the leader toured America. He captured the imagination of America and when he departed the future of the Army here was assured.

## VI

Mrs. Booth was frail in health, all her life having suffered from an affliction of the spine. When the pain in her



body was more than she could stand, she was prevailed upon to consult an eminent physician. Without comment she heard his verdict. She had cancer and could not live two years. At a window William awaited the return of the cab to their home and ran out to help her up the steps. Smiling through her tears she told him of her doom. William tried to speak but no words came.

A few weeks before her death Catherine removed her wedding ring and slipped it on her husband's finger. To the Army she dictated a message. "My Dear Children and Friends: I have loved you much, and have helped you little. Fight on. I will meet you in Heaven." A countless multitude gathered to see "the Mother of the Salvation Army" laid to rest in Abney Park Cemetery. Though bowed with sorrow William could not let pass this opportunity to exhort sinners to seek the throne of grace. He spoke in the name of Catherine. "She was good, a thorough hater of sham, hypocrisies and make-believes. She was love, her whole soul full of tender, deep compassion. She was a warrior. She said not to others, 'Go,' but, 'Here, let me go.'"

After Catherine's death William became a wanderer, visiting the ever-expanding chain of Army outposts in the far quarters of the earth. His children and grandchildren were in the ranks and in high stations of command. The General had many of the qualities of a despot, and these irked particularly the second son, Ballington, who eventually seceded from the Army and started the rival Volunteers of America in the United States. Promptly the General-in-Chief directed that he be carried as a "deserter" on the Army rosters.

Upon the founder's death, in 1912, Bramwell Booth succeeded his father.

Six years ago another schism in the family came to light in a contest which resulted in the deposition of the aged and infirm Bramwell from command. Evangeline, the youngest child but one, had built in America an Army organization that overshadowed in prestige and power the London headquarters. Her name was offered for the succession and only after a spirited contest, sharply dividing the Booth family, did her supporters admit defeat. But last autumn when Eva, as she is called in the home circle, was finally elevated to the supreme command, there was a public reconciliation with Bramwell's widow and daughter. It was genuine, for the Booths do not do such things for show.

William Booth himself lived to see the institution that he had brought into being by flourishing an umbrella and dodging garbage on Mile End Waste become one without a peer in the world. He saw it acquire banks, insurance companies, publishing houses, factories, farms and hospitals. He saw the recruits he took from public houses and brothels replaced by graduates of Army cadet schools. The old man who had limped home cut and bleeding from the manhandling of mobs while the police looked on with hands in their pockets lived to exchange quips with jovial King Edward, to dine in the White House and be called into consultation by the heads of governments throughout Europe. In his last public appearance, on May 12, 1912, the patriarch told an audience filling vast Albert Hall that 200,000 homeless men slept that night under roofs of the Salvation Army. And only Queen Victoria's funeral drew a throng larger than that which saw this Christian soldier borne to rest beside his Catherine.

# Doing Business with Russia

BY A. A. BOUBLIKOFF

*The American business man, if he is to gain any advantage from trade with the Soviets, must enter it in a very unorthodox manner*

NOW that recognition has been granted to the Soviets, all tender feelings have been expressed and the celebration is over, the time has come to "talk turkey"—to do some real business, if any is possible.

Citizens all over the country are beginning to ask with some impatience: where is the half-billion-a-year business with Russia which was promised by the politicians as a return for recognition?

At the outset, one thing has to be borne in mind—namely, that this business can not be done in the customary, haphazard American way; Russia is entirely too big to be treated as an ordinary customer. From a business point of view, Russia represents a tremendous universal trust, horizontal as well as vertical, with conscripted labor, conscripted clerical and technical personnel. Nobody there has the right to strike, to move, or even to resign without the permission of his superiors. No dividends need to be shown, no shareholders to be reckoned with. If the policy of a private company proves to be erroneous, its board has only the resources of the company to fall back upon, while the Board of the Russian Trust has the financial and natural re-

sources of a population of 150,000,000 and of one-sixth of the earth's solid surface, all in one fist.

It was not an empty boast, when the head of the Russian Oil Trust, Mr. Serebrovsky, used the phrase, "I and Mr. Rockefeller." Russia, if she elected to do so, could overnight chase the Standard Oil from the world's markets. Of course, the losses connected with such an undertaking would be tremendous. They would most certainly undermine even the financial strength of the Standard Oil. Yet at the same time they would produce only one more ripple on the troubled Russian financial sea. Russia's yearly budget is entirely too large to be upset by losses of several hundreds of millions. This does not indicate that Russia would do such a thing. In fact she wants, and even needs badly, to sell at a profit. Yet more than any one else she can afford to sell at a loss, for she may easily make up those losses somewhere else. When she needed credit and the international usurers demanded of her up to thirty-six per cent discount on her notes, she could afford to sell her goods at twenty per cent below cost and still make a "profit" of six-



teen per cent. When the appetites of the usurers went down to eighteen per cent and less, she could very well prefer to sell her anthracite to Canada considerably below the cost of production, because she paid her workingmen in paper rubles, while the price she received was in good Canadian dollars. No American private concern can be guided in its commercial activities by such "business considerations." Yet they can not be regarded as unbusiness-like for Russia, when the peculiar Russian conditions are taken into account.

## II

You can disregard the desires and needs of a prospective buyer of \$1,000 worth of merchandise, but you can not afford to dismiss without attentive study the desires and whims of a prospective customer for several hundred million dollars' worth.

The first thing the Soviets are sure to demand is a long-term credit; and by "credit" they mean a perpetual investment of ever-increasing dimensions. They may repay in one year a credit of, let us say, 200 millions granted them for one year, but they most certainly will come forward with a demand for a "new" credit of 300 millions. Thus the original "small" credit will become a permanent investment steadily increasing in size. It would be only human for the creditor to increase credit to a fellow who pays always strictly on the dot, until . . .

Of course, America has a very wide experience with losses from foreign business. The sums she has hitherto invested—and lost—in this field are incomparably larger than the trifling 200 or 300 millions which are spoken of in the case of Russia. Yet those were either governmental, i.e. nobody's, loans or

widely scattered private investments in foreign shares and bonds. Nobody ever went bankrupt because a single foreign bond issue was defaulted. In the case of Russia we have to deal with highly concentrated manufacturer's credits. If any firm should assume the risks involved in such credits it would be ruined unless the credits granted were met strictly on due dates. One can hardly expect any firm to assume such risks.

Therefore it is perhaps worth while to analyze the whole situation from a purely business point of view, putting aside all political considerations: animosity as well as sympathy towards Russia and her extraordinary "experiment."

One thing is clear: that if dealing with Russia is considered a matter of national interest, then the United States government must provide guarantees. Guarantees are certainly preferable to direct credits granted by the government, for they would not strain governmental resources at the present difficult moment. Even if the government's indorsement had to be made good through the default of the debtor, this unpleasant reckoning would not have to be met until some three or five years from now, when the present depression had been forgotten and the government's financial status greatly improved. In the meantime the government would be relieved of the support of those who, now unemployed, would be put to work on orders placed on the strength of such guarantees.

So far, so good. Conditions may arise wherein a government can afford to open hopeless credits and be none the worse for it. In the old days, when government apparatus was still very crude, almost every nation at some time or other entrusted, with great advantage

to itself, private contractors with such governmental functions as, for instance, the collection of taxes. Why should not the United States government entrust somebody with the task of organizing relief for the unemployed instead of doing it herself? At the present time she has her hands full of every kind of task and worry. But why, precisely, should Russia, and not some American citizen or some collective body of American citizens be given the privilege of acting in such a rôle? Millions of good Americans would be only too willing to organize work for their fellow citizens, now unemployed, if only the government's credit were lavished upon them.

Evidently there must be reasons why the government should prefer Russia to any one else. What can these reasons be? Naturally, the first and best one should be the probability of repayment of the credit granted. Of course, up to now the Soviets have been very strict in paying off their current debts—they are quite right when they feel indignant at having been placed among the defaulting nations under the Johnson resolution. Yet this can not be regarded as sure proof that they will continue to be as strict in the future, or that they will even be able to repay. Laws of economics are working as inexorably in Communist Russia as they are in other countries. Look at the working of the laws governing paper money inflation. Paper money is behaving in Soviet Russia in exactly the same manner as it did in capitalistic monarchies and republics of Western Europe and America. Russians run their industries consistently "in the red." The final result of such policies is known only too well—unavoidable bankruptcy. When this financial bankruptcy comes, will Russia be able to meet her foreign commit-

ments, even if she should be most eager to do so?

Americans are optimists by nature. They are accustomed to doing things in a big way. Should Russian credits prove to be "safe" for a few years, loans are apt to rise quickly to dizzy heights. Therefore potential losses in connection with Russian business are enormous, even if only business considerations are taken into account.

And, remote as it may appear to outside observers, the possibility of a political upheaval in Russia can not be overlooked in granting her large scale credits. Count Witte once jokingly remarked that Russia is a country of limitless possibilities, meaning that you can expect almost anything from Russians. They are fickle. They all are maximalists. Did they not in a relatively short period of time jump from Tsarist autocracy to the utterly anarchistic "freedom" of the Provisional Government and back again—into the grip of the most ruthlessly despotic proletarian dictatorship? Any political party which succeeded the Bolsheviki would most certainly repudiate their foreign commitments. The new Russian government would do its best to demonstrate how much the Bolsheviki spent for foreign propaganda and would declare that if foreign capitalists had been foolish enough to finance the subversive activities of the Comintern, the Russian people could not be held responsible for their folly. Anyway, repudiation would be so profitable that hardly any successor to the Soviet régime would be able to resist the temptation. Therefore, there *is* a purely political risk involved in granting credits to Russia. Ask Lloyd's—they insure against almost anything—if they would underwrite any substantial sum against the possi-



bility of a new Russian revolution. And the premium they would demand!

### III

However, the above considerations do not mean at all that business could not be conducted with present-day Russia—a very profitable business and on a very large scale. The very vastness of Russia as a prospective customer offers the opportunity of doing such business and makes her preferable to any other body of men in the rôle of agent for the United States government to relieve unemployment in America and to liquidate the depression in general.

In order to achieve this goal, business with Russia should be organized in such a way as to insure coincident profits of such magnitude as to make the eventual losses, should Russia repudiate or prove unable to pay her debts, negligible.

Sugar is a case in point. The sugar business in America is in a bad way. Nobody connected with it makes any money. The prices of all other commodities have risen substantially, but the price of sugar is still well below the level which could assure profits to all concerned. The reason for this unpleasant situation lies in the fact that there is in Cuba a surplus of one million tons of sugar. This enormous stock, for which there is no market, demoralizes the whole business. How can a rise of price be achieved as long as there looms the danger of this stock being poured into the market?

Suppose a syndicate were formed, with \$100,000,000 capital fully guaranteed by the government, which would sell to Russia a million tons of refined sugar on a seven or even ten years' credit under very liberal condi-

tions. Suppose, further, that removal from the market by one stroke of one million tons of superfluous merchandise caused a rise in the price of sugar of only one cent per pound. The profits to be derived from this rise by sugar beet growers, by sugar refiners, by the holders of Cuban state, railway and sugar securities, by American firms doing business with Cuba (all the Cuban turmoil ruining this business is due primarily to the low price of sugar) would be of such magnitude as to offset any possible losses from non-payment on the part of Russia.

The sale of one or two hundred thousand tons would not rehabilitate the sugar industry. Russia alone is in a position to absorb goods in such quantities as to produce an appreciable rise in price. This very fact makes Russia preferable for the rôle of agent for the government in curing the American market from the effects of overproduction to any other nation or any other prospective buyer who would like to buy with American credit.

As a matter of fact, *only* selling on such a large scale would make Russian business worth while and essentially safe. Any haphazard selling of relatively small amounts of this and that would entail unjustifiable risks and would not materially help America. Any goods thus sold to Russia in small quantities America might just as well distribute free among her nationals. The mere hope that Russia may possibly pay in some remote future (and she may not) is not a sufficient reason for giving away goods which could very well be used by suffering American unemployed. Litvinoff during his visit to America spoke casually of \$35,000,000 worth of fats which Russia could find a use for. Are there not enough Ameri-

cans willing to consume those fats, but who, unfortunately, are not in a position to buy them at the present time?

Any credit to Russia has to be justified by some indirect and very substantial good to America, and that in the immediate present.

#### IV

Would the Russians agree to such a transaction as the buying at one time of a million tons of sugar? A flat refusal on their part can hardly be expected. The present rulers of Russia are anything but stupid, and they will visualize immediately what generous credits on the part of America may mean to them. Russia at the present time is in the throes of a pronounced currency inflation. As a matter of fact the whole celebrated Five-Year-Plan is nothing but an immense inflation-promotion. The only distinction between it and the customary inflationary hot-house industrial expansion in other countries is that in other countries industrial expansion generally followed the currency inflation created by some other cause (war, revolution, etc.), while Russia, deprived of other financial possibilities of materializing her industrial dreams, resorted to inflation as the easiest, if not the only method at her disposal of financing the industrialization of the country. This shift of cause and effect does not in the least affect the ultimate result: the money in Russia is rapidly depreciating, with the customary results of this calamitous phenomenon.

The price of a pound of sugar even last year was well above five rubles (\$2.50 at par). Now it is probably something like ten rubles, in undercover trade. Should the Soviet government acquire the Cuban sugar and offer

it to the population in limitless quantity at one ruble fifty kopeks a pound, the people would jump at the possibility of exchanging their worthless paper rubles for a delicacy they have not had the opportunity to enjoy fully for a long time. Russia's pre-War production of sugar was in the neighborhood of two million tons. With the present diminished home production the population would easily absorb an additional million tons. Who could resist the temptation to get something toothsome in exchange for a piece of paper which may amount to nothing in the very near future? Russian passenger traffic has increased by 300 per cent since the War and revolution. Why? Because, first of all, travel is cheap, and, secondly, a trip is some kind of pleasure which *can* be bought with rubles, while many other desirable things are simply not to be had, even at a high price.

The Soviet government would derive from the transaction numerous and very substantial benefits. First of all it would have a definite commercial profit: the ruble's buying capacity has not yet fallen to the level of five cents (the purchase price of refined sugar in America) for one ruble fifty kopeks (the proposed selling price in Russia). Therefore, selling the sugar at such a price, the Soviet government would make a very considerable profit. Secondly, it would extract from circulation 3,500,000,000 rubles, thus greatly enhancing the buying capacity of the remainder. Then all the people with improved rubles in their pockets would feel happier and therefore more reconciled to the régime. The government itself would receive enormous support in the financing of the second Five-Year-Plan in the form of the recuperated buying capacity of the paper ruble.



Under all these conditions it is nonsense to fear that the Soviet government would refuse to accept American merchandise on a liberal credit basis, even though the merchandise were chosen in consideration of American interest to sell, and not so much in consideration of the Russians' desire to buy.

Of course they may prefer to buy machinery, but they need so much of everything, and, above all, they need so badly to save the ruble from the impending utter depreciation that they would gladly accept anything offered to them, provided that their buying things America is desirous of selling were made conditional on the granting to them credits for things they want to acquire.

Russia has a planned economy. It

would be foolhardy in the extreme to try to deal with her in the customary haphazard way, leaving the decisions to be made in the hands of unrelated individual interests. Not only is it true that the present rulers of Russia are shrewd, but they have an inherent strength in their unified planned economy and monopoly of foreign trade.

In order to avoid losses and to derive substantial benefits from dealing with Russia, America must meet her with action just as carefully planned as her own. The whip of credit is in America's hands. Why not make the Russians buy first of all things that America needs to sell, even though they are not exactly what Russia prefers to acquire?





# The National Spare Tire

BY EARLE D. ROSS

*We have had enough experience with constitutional amendments  
now to accomplish the too-long-delayed abolition of  
vice-presidents*

BY A UNIQUE concurrence of the governmental expert, the practical politician, and the "man in the street," the vice-presidency is the one conspicuous failure of our Federal experiment. It is the one office that has not justified itself in activity and authority. With all the great increase in Federal powers which have added so potently to other executive and administrative positions, this office has been static or even decadent until in Bryce's phrase it is "even more insignificant" than the Constitution intended. The inactive dignity of "his superfluous excellency" has been rarely and decreasingly sought by leaders of the first rank, and the few ambitious and aggressive incumbents have not been able to make anything of it. For Adams, Jefferson and Van Buren the second office was but an interlude in an active career, while for Calhoun it was an unsatisfying consolation prize. Colonel Roosevelt, when brought by fate and the politicians to the office which as youthful critic he had regarded as peculiarly insipid, had no more original plan than that of reading law in his all too numerous spare hours and bade fair to fulfil John Hay's jubilant prediction that he was at last

placed where he would be forced to "hold his tongue." And all of General Dawes's efficiency zeal found here no relieving outlet.

That the office—the second in the land—ranks distressingly low in public estimation and interest there is every proof. The vice-presidency, in fact, has become a stock American joke ranking in the humorous columns and "hours" with such perennials as mothers-in-law, boarding-house prunes, erratic skirts and absent-minded professors, and has long outlived the Erie Railroad, Ford car, Uncle Josh and city dude motifs. Nast's representation of a running-mate by a tag on the coat-tail of the head of the ticket is a fair indication of popular interest and respect. In a recent comic burlesque of the national government the vice-president appears throughout as the star buffoon.

The office presents a remarkable, if not unparalleled, anomaly in that, while its particular functions are so negligible, its possibilities are supreme. As the first vice-president somewhat pedantically described himself, "I am possessed of two separate powers; the one in *esse*, and the other in *posse*. I am Vice-President. In this I am nothing, but I may



be everything"—or in Bryce's concise phrase, he is "*aut nullus aut Caesar*." There is the further anomaly that this official who is potentially the nation's chief executive is provided by the Constitution, not with executive duties, none of which seemed appropriate or available, but with an ineffective, usually nominal legislative function.

## II

The explanation of the futility of this pretentious institution is not in the folly of the original aim but in the development under actual government of unforeseen influences which have prevented the realization of that aim. As every one is aware, one of the most stabilizing foundations of the modern business world has been that of insurance. The vice-presidency was designed as a political insurance policy—an assurance to the extent of two lives of the maintenance of a certain standard of ability and integrity and of the continuity of a given line of policy. How contrary has been the experience!

In addition to inevitable differences of personality and temperament, which the experience with monarchs might have suggested, the founding fathers in this, as in other connections, took no account of the party system, by the practical workings of which the office has involved a direct negation of the insurance function. Rather than representing the deliberate, reasoned second choice of impartial electors, the selection since the rise of the convention system in the 'Thirties has been dictated by motives of the narrowest party expediency. Candidates for the second place have been selected to placate disappointed factions—thus working against clear-cut divisions in party alignments—to appeal to

certain groups or States, or to attract campaign funds—not to mention the cases in which the potentially crucial decisions have been determined largely by chance. Sectional balance of the ticket has generally been regarded as desirable, and the next logical step, in line with partisan tactics in committee membership and State and local nominations, is a sex one. Already suggestions of this are being made. In the last campaign a boom for vice-president of at least news-story proportions was started in a Northwestern State for Mrs. Roosevelt Longworth on the plea that her candidacy "would add pep and color to the race," and a speaker at a recent convention of the National Association of Women Lawyers declared that she would "be sadly disappointed if within the next decade a woman is not made at least the vice-president of this great nation." In other words, the vice-presidential has been as unlike the presidential nominee in background, interests and convictions as the expansive bounds of party organization would permit.

Instead of insuring a continuity of policies, a succession under such matings has at times meant a more effective break than would a change of party control. Such strategy has dictated as strange alliances as old-line Whig and constitutional Democrat, free-soiler and slave-holder, free-trader and protectionist, hard money and soft, gold standard and free silver, stalwart and half-breed, progressive and stand-patter. The system has witnessed such a *reductio ad absurdum* by a desperate minority as the organization plan to run David B. Hill with Bryan in 1900, the nomination four years later of an octogenarian millionaire, and after the fight to the death in the convention of 1924,

the combination of a corporation lawyer with an agrarian.

These tactics, to cite but a few instances, wrecked the Whig programme in the 'Forties, intensified the abuses and bitterness of reconstruction, and threatened financial disaster in 1893 during the critical illness of President Cleveland.

From the viewpoint of immediate party advantage the office has been of doubtful utility, for at least as many second-place candidates have proven liabilities and handicaps as those who have been special assets—as witness three of the Johnsons (Richard, Andrew and Hiram), Frank Blair, Gratz Brown, John A. Logan, Whitelaw Reid, Arthur Sewall and possibly Charles W. Fairbanks whom Lodge considered the most available choice “under not very good conditions.”

### III

In view of the great potentialities of the office, there have been continued proposals and definite efforts to provide activities that would enhance its power and prestige and thus attract men of first-rate calibre, committed to the administration programme, who would thus fulfil the original assurance aim. The matured possibilities of Federal authority were not realized and the definitive adjustment of powers between the executive and legislative branches made until the modern period of socialization and centralization; and there has been until recent times the lingering hope that something really useful might be found for the ornamental figurehead.

The most natural and apposite employment would be as a presidential adviser, by which he might keep in close touch with administrative policies and

by observation and practice acquire experience in statecraft. Washington regarded Adams as a regular adviser and at times invited him to meetings of the inchoate cabinet, but a precedent was not established. Vice-President Jefferson viewed his office as constitutionally limited to legislative functions, and that is the view that has generally prevailed. The relations of Jackson and Van Buren, Polk and Dallas, and McKinley and Hobart were unusually intimate but did not lead in any of these cases to membership in the cabinet. Bryan in 1908 provoked a passing discussion of the matter by his proposal to give his running-mate a regular place at the council table, but the proposal from a defeated candidate could have but an academic interest. Wilson's request to the vice-president to conduct cabinet meetings during his absence abroad was so unusual, controlled and restricted as to have no permanent significance for the office. Finally President Harding, in consonance perhaps with his policy of leaning heavily upon advisers, formally invited his associate to cabinet meetings, and the practice has been renewed by the present Administration. The experiment has failed either to strengthen the Administration or to enhance the standing of the second office. With no department at its back, no patronage to dispense, the chair at the foot of the table can command hardly more than polite tolerance; and for the chief executive to share in any real way his function of policy determination would mean an inevitable weakening of the executive influence, both in the government and in the party.

Proposals to give the potential chief executive effective legislative powers are still more chimerical and inconsistent. It is perhaps not surprising that



an impatient young enthusiast like Theodore Roosevelt in 1896 should have advocated seriously that this seeming drone in the governmental hive should, in addition to regular membership in the cabinet, be given full rights of voting and debating in the upper house. But it is rather inconceivable that Senator Beveridge, in view of the acute sensitiveness of his chamber for its prerogatives, should have suggested that the appointment of committees be surrendered to a representative of the executive branch. With formal connection with both branches, the office has found no necessary service in either.

Thus, neither real executive nor legislator, the vice-president, as the latest one has recently admitted, remains "a figure of slight importance"—our governmental "fifth wheel," as Beveridge termed the office a quarter of a century ago, or in Mr. Garner's more up-to-date phrase, "the spare tire on the national automobile." The chief attractions, according to the same authority, are the wholly negative ones of lack of responsibility for governmental policies and freedom from the worries of patronage disposal. The social opportunities, welcomed by most incumbents, have been eschewed by the present one.

#### IV

But the office is not merely superfluous in *esse*; the ever-present possibility of succession, in these times of the extended and exalted powers of the president, involves a menace of intensified significance to the realization of the popular will as expressed in the presidential election. Hence the only effective treatment for this vestigial organ in the body politic would seem to be removal, provided the constitutional purpose can be fulfilled adequately

through some other agency. The early provision for secondary succession by the presiding officers of the two houses was open to the objections of too great a likelihood of a change of party control, and of legislative domination. The one case in which such a succession appeared imminent, in the threatened removal of President Johnson, gave point to the latter objection.

The present system of cabinet succession is not subject to either of these dangers, and is calculated to provide the maximum assurance of continuity of standards and policies. The official of all others who should be closest to the president and whose choice reflects so surely the attitude of the chief executive is that of secretary of state. It would certainly be a reflection upon the political sagacity of any administration, as it would be a direct invitation to failure, to have in this key position a leader not in fullest sympathy and understanding with the head of the government and of the party. The direct functions of this department—which have long made the name obsolete—from the beginning have been among the most important, and the list of the heads includes the most distinguished, if not the ablest leaders of their periods. The much-denounced "secretarial succession" before 1828, as the practice of nominating secretaries of state for the presidency was termed by critics, brought a line of remarkably distinguished and capable executives; and the abuses in party manipulation of this period were not due to this basis of selection. For the immediate future it is evident that the most far-reaching policies and crucial decisions will lie in this field. Aside from matters of more strictly diplomatic intercourse, the negotiation of commercial treaties—in spite of all

trends toward "economic nationalism"—will perhaps have a determining influence upon our industrial future. By the circumstances of his selection, his party standing and his diplomatic and general administrative experience, no one should be in a better position to understand and if necessary carry on the party programme. Next to the head of foreign affairs, in dignity and actual power, is the head of the Treasury Department, whose standing, ability, and experience would provide a further assurance of competence and stability.

The objection that the direct succession should be in an official popularly chosen is but another confusion of the form with the substance of political determination. Under the actual operation of the party system popular opinion has little, if anything to do with the selection of vice-presidential candidates, while a president may and should be held directly responsible for the selection of his chief, and especially his closest, advisers. If the change advocated had the effect of keeping the standard of cabinet selections up to the highest traditions, ample justification would be provided.

Admitting the desirability of abolishing an office that has not only failed to fulfil the purpose for which it was created but involves an ever-present danger of incompetent and unrepresentative leadership, there arises the obstacle of customary inertia against the removal of long-standing obsolete institutions, and the supposed special difficulty of effecting governmental reorganization by constitutional amendment. Beveridge in 1909 was convinced that cabinet succession was greatly to be preferred but felt that the adoption of an

amendment was wholly in the realm of the unattainable. And until a few years later there was a general conviction that the organic law was impregnable to formal change under normal conditions. In the fall of 1913 Clarence Darrow, with characteristic hyperbole, told a forum audience at Madison, Wisconsin, that it was as easy to amend the Constitution as to take down by hand the State capitol and carry it on foot to Chicago. But unfortunately for his line of argument, the picturesque figure which would have met with sympathetic response in the past was already becoming out of date, with two amendments proclaimed that very year. Intercommunication, along with other unifying influences, has created at last a national public opinion which can be appealed to effectively, both for the special ends of pressure groups and for the attainment of constructive political and social changes. The tempo of constitutional development, like that of every other aspect of our life, is being tremendously accelerated.

One aspect of this constitutional alteration involves a modernizing and systematizing of the organization, institutions and practices of government. The lame duck sessions are no more, the "interregnum" between administrations has been shortened and amendments were introduced in both houses of the last session for doing away with the electoral college. The next logical and imperative step in this reorganization programme is the formal abolition of this office of contingency which, failing to develop in itself useful functions, has merely negative attractiveness and hence constitutes a risk of ever-increasing proportions.



# THE LITERARY LANDSCAPE



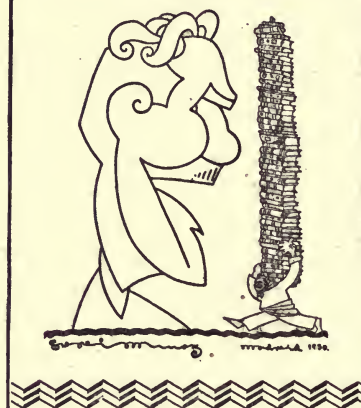
TWO OF the outstanding books of the early 1935 season are concerned with the World War and it will be interesting to see what happens to their brave publishers as a result of their defiance of an accepted tabu. Perhaps as a result of what appears at the moment to be an easing of the tension in Europe and the East we may be willing to resume our education in what modern warfare means, abandoned a year or two ago because the public suddenly decided it "didn't care to hear any more about the War."

It is difficult to believe that up to now we have really understood the meaning of war, since we have in the last few years spent a great deal of time and billions of dollars getting ready for more of the same, only much worse because of the forward march of science and invention since 1918. Unless, of course, the world is really quite mad, as a good many observers have suspected, the Landscaper among them. Certainly it would be far easier to take the affirmative in any argument on the subject.

One of the two books is a novel which might be well used in the argument, including its title. This is John Brophy's *The World Went Mad* (Macmillan, \$2.50), a panoramic study of what hap-

by

HERSCHEL BRICKELL



pened to a number of individuals during the War years. There are something like forty characters in the book and the scene shifts from England and France to Egypt, Palestine, and even to the United States. There is a connecting story which binds tightly enough together the different episodes.

The book also cuts across several strata of society and the author has, with a striking objectivity, conveyed his lesson, which is that war is just as dangerous and hurtful to the mind and spirit as it is to the body, and that non-combatants are in no sense immune from damage.

In other words, Mr. Brophy's book is not in the somewhat familiar horror pattern; it has humor and balance. It is also essentially ironical and while it is written with sympathy, there can be very little doubt of the author's scorn for a race that can think of no better way of settling its quarrels than that of taking the youngest and finest of its members and blowing them to bits in a thousand assorted ways.

The novel does not hold up quite to the end, as its two concluding chapters are hardly up to the rest, although they score because of their bitterly ironical flavor. It is an exceptionally well done novel in which the characterization par-

ticularly is of a high quality, and regardless of its subject matter is easily one of the most distinguished pieces of fiction of the young year.

### *An Aviator's Story*

The other volume mentioned is Norman Archibald's *Heaven High-Hell Deep: 1917-1918* (Albert and Charles Boni, \$2.50), which is the simple straightforward personal narrative of a normal young American who was completely fascinated by the aviation arm before we entered the War. So when we did finally get in, he lost no time in joining the aviation corps. He quite frankly liked the prospects of fighting in the air and galloped through with his training with as much haste as possible, learning to fly a Nieuport at Issoudun, which was in itself an adventure.

With his buddy Beauchamp he finished his course and was sent up to join the First Pursuit Squadron, in which were several ex-Lafayette Escadrille flyers. He saw service at the front, all kinds of service, and took part in a number of thrilling battles; he met tragedy there, too, in the death of his friend Beauchamp. Then one day a shrapnel burst caught the Spad he was using as a pursuit plane and brought it down a wreck behind the German lines.

He was only slightly injured and survived to taste life in several German prison camps, in one of which he remained until the Armistice. After he is captured the tone of the book changes and we know what "Hell Deep" means in the title; it is not only that Archibald himself suffered as a prisoner, but that he is able to make us see so clearly what happened to a lot of other first-rate human material. There is no indication in the book of how he feels on the subject of pacifism, but he has done one

sketch of a British aviator whose face is so ruined that not even the hardest men can look at him, which is as powerful a sermon against war as you will find anywhere.

The especial appeal of the book lies in the fact that it is a normal man's reaction to war, untinged by even a suspicion of a neurosis; it is also movingly and powerfully written because there is not much striving for effect. The Landscaper has read most of the important books about the War, and is sure the Archibald volume deserves to stand well up toward the top of the list, a really remarkable document, and a book that may be read for its sheer excitement or for the intelligent information about flying that is in it, or because it gives without exaggeration the terrible side of the most romantic and gallant aspect of present-day conflict, war in the air.

### *Mr. Wilder Goes Native*

Of the year's first offerings of fiction, none was more eagerly awaited than Thornton Wilder's *Heaven's My Destination* (Harpers, \$2.50), both because it was Mr. Wilder's first novel in four years, or since *The Woman of Andros*, and because it was his first American novel. It is not the sort of book that any one expected from Mr. Wilder's charming Eighteenth Century pen, which may help to explain the puzzlement of the many people who have commented upon it.

In simple outline, it is the story of a "good" young American, a lad whose mind is completely closed and who is a sort of itinerant Y.M.C.A. secretary, although he is really a textbook salesman. Mr. Wilder has said that he did not mean the picture to be satirical, but his George Brush, while close enough to



the flesh to be recognizable, seems too good to be true and therefore the element of satire appears to be unescapable.

George makes a general nuisance of himself at any rate, and even insists upon marrying a girl he has "seduced" at a farmer's house, although she doesn't want to marry him and is bored to death—as who can blame her?—by the thought of having to live with such a paragon. As satire the book seems to the Landscaper moderately successful, no more than that, and one of its gravest defects is that it lacks the feeling of first-hand knowledge and observation; it seems more than a little second-hand, as if the author had stuck too closely within academic walls to do this sort of thing as it should be done.

Some reviewers found it hilariously funny, but its humor did not strike the Landscaper as anything else except mildly amusing. The book has none of the stylistic virtues of the early exotic novels, which if it were better would really be a recommendation as it would indicate that Mr. Wilder meant to get more blood and bones into his writing. Perhaps that is what he means to do, and perhaps he will be successful—at least William Lyon Phelps says he is a genius. But *Heaven's My Destination*, in the Landscaper's judgment, is not of any particular importance.

### *Other Disappointments*

There have been, it may as well be said now, several disappointments of this kind since the turn of the year. There is, for example, Phil Stong's *Week End* (Harcourt, Brace, \$2), in which an Iowa novelist turns to his adopted state of Connecticut for the scene of a sophisticated and skilfully executed short novel, cut according to a familiar pattern. It is just a little too

slick to be really good, and this despite its humor; the characters never seem to matter very much, and certainly the book has none of the fine earthy American flavor of Mr. Stong's *State Fair*. You will go a long way before you find a better-made piece of fiction than *Week End*, however, and if Mr. Stong is going after the magazine market, he's there already, with a Rolls-Royce around the corner.

Then there is A. G. MacDonald's *How Like an Angel* (Macmillan, \$2.50), a satire by the author of the delicious *England, Their England*, which certainly has its amusing points, but which is much less good than the first novel of a brilliant young Scot. The new book deals with the life history of a lad brought up on a South Sea Island by three missionary foster-fathers. He eventually finds himself amid "civilization," where he is taken for a famous movie star and carried to London for a triumphal visit of the woman he is supposed to be married to, another bright light of the cinema. Mr. MacDonald gets in a good many hits in his book, which is often highly entertaining, but, as William McFee said of it, the main weakness lies in the fact that its author is not familiar enough with his material. Also it strikes the Landscaper that satire aimed at the movies misses because the movies themselves and the people in them are self-satirizing. The MacDonald book is not by any means bad, but it is just not so good as some of us hoped it would be after we had read *England, Their England*.

### *A Poet's First Novel*

Then there is Mark Van Doren's *The Transients* (Morrow) which is the first novel of a fine poet and a most intelligent editor and lecturer on litera-

ture, which disappointed the Landscaper because its interesting philosophical idea did not seem to be worked out into anything recognizable as approaching acceptable fiction. The style has great beauty in its crystalline simplicity, but the story is not as substantial as it would need to be to appeal to more than a few readers. The theme of the book is the sudden appearance on earth of two perfect beings, a man and a woman. They are naturally very upsetting to mortals, but they finally go off together. There are many subtle overtones and the whole performance is admirable, but most people will be frankly puzzled by what it is all about. Some one wisely said that it was an idea that should have been made into a poem rather than into a novel.

As for the kind of novels which may be recommended with fewer reservations than these just mentioned, there is Pearl Buck's *A House Divided* (John Day-Reynal and Hitchcock, \$2.50), which brings to a close the trilogy that started with *The Good Earth* and was continued with *Sons*. The present book is different from the others because it is about the present, a good part of it being laid in this country, but the solid and impressive virtues of the earlier volumes are here in good measure also.

The central figure of *A House Divided* is Yuan, who is the son of Wang the Tiger of *Sons* and the grandson, therefore, of Wang Lung of *The Good Earth*. Yuan is the New China, a lad filled with intellectual doubts who has a very difficult time finding himself. Among his American adventures—he is in this country being educated—is a love affair with an American girl, which gives him a good shaking up and opens his eyes at the same time. He fi-

nally goes back to China to do his share of bearing his country's burdens.

Among a number of unusually interesting features of the book is Yuan's comments upon Occidental civilization as seen from the point of view of a Chinese student. On the whole the book has an obvious immediacy that was lacking from its predecessors, which enjoyed a sort of romantic charm, but it is a fine novel and should be popular.

### *Small Town Stuff*

A straight-out American novel which may not quite succeed in establishing its author's thesis, that in this country men are completely at the mercy of women, who really would prefer to be dominated, but which at any rate tells a good story in our own language, is Fulton Oursler's *Joshua Todd* (Farrar and Rinehart, \$2.50). It is the tale of a small-town—Eastern Shore of Maryland—newspaper man who marries a nitwit and works like a dog for her and then falls in with a pretty and intelligent woman who takes up the task of running him where Wife Number 1 left off. Joshua himself is well done, but there are a number of minor characters who are admirably brought to life, and the whole book has a lusty vigor that is lacking from most contemporary fiction. This is at least a readable and entertaining piece of work, although the Landscaper closed it feeling that Joshua's life had actually been far less controlled by women than Mr. Oursler seemed to think.

One of the longer novels of recent weeks is *Via Mala* by John Knittel (Stokes, \$2.50), a book that has been very popular in England, and which was well enough received here upon its publication to make it certain of some measure of popularity. It is a carefully



detailed story of the murder of a father of a family, which seems entirely justified, and which is a study in morbid psychology that leaves a deep impression. The book seems somewhat overwritten, as do the majority of long novels of the present, but it is a good job and will repay those who are searching for new serious fiction.

### *A Hospital Story*

A novel by an author whose work has the appealing element of reliability is Helen Ashton's *Hornet's Nest* (Macmillan, \$2.50), which is the story of what happened in a small English town after an emergency operation for appendicitis on one of the women characters. There are three doctors of widely varying types involved, and Miss Ashton is unflinchingly truthful in laying bare the harm that small town malice can do to human lives. A good part of the action is laid in a hospital and these scenes are especially well done. Miss Ashton's *Dr. Serocold* will be remembered, and the new novel pleased the Landscaper a good deal more than its well known predecessor.

Other recent novels of greater or less importance include Bessie Breuer's tense study of a man in pursuit of a woman, *Memory of Love* (Simon and Schuster, \$2), a brilliantly done book, mainly about a detestable and unimportant male; Annulet Andrews's *Melissa Starke* (Dutton), an old-fashioned and faultily done story of Georgia just after the Civil War with its charming spots, but very spotty; Anthony Thorne's *Delay in the Sun* (Doubleday, Doran, \$2.50), a light and pleasant novel laid in the north of Spain which concerns itself with the mix-ups in the affairs of a group of stranded English people; and Thorne

Smith's *The Glorious Pool* (Doubleday, Doran, \$2), the last novel of a bawdy humorist, which lives up to the best or the worst of his other books, a wildly cracked story about a fountain of youth, a bloodhound that couldn't smell and a joy ride on a hook-and-ladder. Mr. Smith, it may be remembered, died only a few months ago.

### *Good Foreign Novels*

Two foreign novels that really deserve more space than is at the Landscaper's disposal are Ricardo Guiraldes's *Don Segundo Sombra: Shadows on the Pampas* (Farrar and Rinehart, \$2.50), translated by Harriet de Onis and with an introduction by Waldo Frank, a fine story of the Argentine cattle country by a writer now dead; and *Land of Promise* by Leo Lama (Macmillan, \$2.50), another tale of the suffering that has been caused to individuals by the anti-Semitic policies of the National Socialists in Germany. The central theme is a love affair between a Jewish girl and a German boy and the book emphasizes the tragedy to youth of having to live under dictatorships.

Of books about the problems that vex the world in our time, one of the most interesting and pessimistic is *The American Diplomatic Game* by Drew Pearson and Constantine Brown (Doubleday, Doran, \$4), which is really an irreverent and cynical and realistic history of peace and disarmament moves from the time of the signing of the Kellogg Pact to the present resumption of the naval race and of the arming of all important countries for what each seems to think an inevitable conflict.

Messrs. Pearson and Brown tell the back-stage story of conferences that were meant to bring about disarma-

ment, but which actually effected nothing; of the petty jealousies and human weaknesses that make it impossible for even the best diplomats to get very far with their plans for making the world a more comfortable and pleasant place in which to live.

From the opening chapters, in which it is explained that Kellogg was more or less forced to sponsor the Pact, which won him the Nobel Prize, to the last gloomy prophecies of another World War, Messrs. Brown and Pearson are realists; they write history as it should be written, from the inside, that is.

### *Are We on Our Way?*

If, after absorbing this large dose of gloom, you feel that you must have a pick-up, something that will make you feel, Well, maybe instead of being in the brink of disaster we are on the edge of a New Era, the Landscaper advises Harold Foster's *The Inevitable World Recovery* (Doubleday, Doran, \$2). Mr. Foster is an English woolen manufacturer who has worked out a fascinatingly simple scheme which explains depressions perfectly—almost too perfectly—and his prediction is that the cycle which began in 1914 and ended about 1934 is about to repeat itself and that as a result the world will soon be so prosperous people just won't know what to do with their money.

Mr. Foster makes it all sound logically convincing, but there are some of us who will always be skeptical of New Eras because they represent pretty dreams that result from wishful thinking and do not check, unhappily, with the facts of history.

However, it sounds well except in one or two places; for example, Mr. Foster says that if we do not resume our lending to foreign countries, after

a bit England will take the place of the creditor nation of the world away from us. Threat or promise?

The Landscaper is no economist; but why should we lend foreign nations more of our billions to buy our goods and give us another insane boom and another and even more severe depression at the end of it? Let the English have the honor of lending money they never even hope to get back.

### *Down with the Future!*

Then there is Roy Helton, a poet and novelist, who, applying his mind to the suffering of the world, decides that the thing that is really wrong with us is our worship of the future. His book is called *Sold Out to the Future* (Harpers, \$2.50), and it has a lot of good stuff in it, although the logic of Mr. Helton's position is not always as clear as it might be. Probably he takes in too much territory; it might have been better if he had just advised people to enjoy each minute as much as possible and to hell with tomorrow so far as trying to live in and for it before it arrived. Anyway, it is a well written and refreshing book, although a number of reviewers have succeeded in finding flaws in its reasoning.

A clear restatement of the liberal position with respect to such forms of government as Communism is to be found in a small book by Joseph Wood Krutch called *Was Europe a Success?* (Farrar and Rinehart, \$1), the material having first appeared in part in *The Nation*. Mr. Krutch calls himself an Old Pagan, believes that European Man in general was a better fellow than he has been represented by some of his enemies, and can see no gains at all from the acceptance of the Marxian philosophy. The Landscaper lines up whole-



heartedly with Mr. Krutch, and the fact that there is no class of people looked upon with such hatred and scorn by the Marxists as the liberals gives your commentator no feeling of uneasiness or embarrassment. Mr. Krutch has contributed an interesting and well done pamphlet to one of the raging controversies of the day and it is well worth reading.

As a footnote, another recent book ought to be useful. It is Mary Britnieva's *One Woman's Story* (Alfred King, \$2.50), which explains what happened to a Russian doctor who married a half-English wife, the author, when he fell under the displeasure of the famous OGPU, the Soviet secret police, who help to make present-day Russia such a charming and civilized country. Like the Tchernavins in *Escape from the Soviets*, Madame Britnieva and her husband were not actively opposed to the new régime in Russia; they wanted no more than to be allowed to work and live in peace. The upshot was that Dr. Britniev was taken out and shot, probably without a trial of any sort, and with no more charges than a suspicion of espionage.

### *Our Own Troubles*

Concerning our domestic problems, we have both sides of the case in Rexford Guy Tugwell's *The Battle for Democracy* (Columbia University Press, \$2.50), a collection of addresses and occasional pieces, and *What of Tomorrow?* by Ogden L. Mills (Macmillan, \$2), in which Mr. Mills wonders what we are going to do about all this enormous debt that is piling up and also explains that he and Mr. Hoover set in motion much of the so-called Recovery Machinery that is now generally accepted as belonging entirely to the New

Deal. Mr. Tugwell explains that he is neither a Fascist nor a Communist, and that he believes in experimenting and never mind the cost; Mr. Mills believes in the balanced budget. Mr. Tugwell's song is far sweeter, of course, and there is a good deal of an evangelistic air about his book. Mr. Mills's book will make the sad Republicans sadder and more fearful and probably nobody else will read it. Mr. Tugwell is pleasant and plausible, but not very deep or very careful to look at both sides, and in this respect, at least, he bears more than a little resemblance to the master politician who now sits in the White House.

Since one of the most discussed plans for getting us out of the depression—granting for the moment that we are still in it and are not really well on our way to bigger and better things—is the building of suitable dwelling places for our population, it is worth while to mention an excellent book in this field, Catherine Bauer's *Modern Housing* (Houghton Mifflin, \$5), which has a world of illustrations from many countries, and which is full of good sense and practical ideas. Certainly we can profit by much that has been done in Holland and the Scandinavian countries, and by what was being done in Austria and Germany before the present chaos began in the two countries. There is no doubt at all of the tremendous possibilities of a nation-wide housing programme.

The Landscaper speaks with some authority on this subject, as he recently bought a fairly new house in the country and has been busy for several weeks finding out how much had to be done to it before it could be brought up to the standard of even somewhat antiquated New York apartments.

Another book of prime interest to Americans is George E. Sokolsky's *Labor's Fight for Power* (Doubleday, Doran, \$2.50), which covers the recent history of the American labor movement in this country under the N.R.A., and which is important for the light it casts upon the developments of the near future.

### *The Nazi Story*

A look at serious books on important foreign topics reveals as one of the most important a fully detailed study of the situation in Germany called *A History of National Socialism*, by Konrad Heiden (Knopf, \$4.50), which tells the whole story of the rise and the accomplishments of the Nazis. The final chapter covering the developments of 1934 was especially written for the American edition of the book. This is a book of permanent historical value, as well as a readable account of how Hitler came to power and of how he has managed his lofty position.

Of the remaining volumes that fall into the miscellaneous class, one the Landscaper would like particularly to recommend is Charles O'Connell's *The Victor Book of the Symphony* (Simon and Schuster, \$3.50), an unusually intelligent book about music in which Mr. O'Connell has analyzed the symphony and concerto forms, explained the instruments in a modern orchestra, given biographical sketches of many composers and explained their principal works. Writing about music is a dangerous occupation, but Mr. O'Connell has dodged the pitfalls, and his book ought to be of real use to music lovers, especially to the vast radio audiences that are now being educated to the best.

Others of the recent books include Edward Corsi's *In the Shadow of Lib-*

*erty* (Macmillan, \$3.50), in which we are told the history of the rise and fall of immigration in this generation by an immigrant who became Commissioner of Immigration; J. Leslie Mitchell's *The Conquest of the Maya* (Dutton, \$3), a fine study of the Maya problem by a famous young archeologist; Dorothy Mills's *The Middle Ages* (Putnam, \$2.50), a simple and very readable account of life in a period that persists in being misunderstood, in which there is much of direct applicability to our modern problems; George Jean Nathan's *Passing Judgments* (Knopf, \$2.50), an amusing collection of pieces mostly about the theatre and filled with excellent debunking; and Edmond Fleg's *Jesus* (Dutton, \$3), a biography of a Jew by a Jew, which is filled with reverence and admiration.

### *Mexico and the Sea*

Also for those who enjoy getting away from the every-day routine of life, there is Larry Barretto's admirably simple and unpretentious *Bright Mexico* (Farrar and Rinehart, \$2.50), which records in excellent prose the impressions made upon an intelligent tourist by a brief stay in our neighboring republic. There are charmingly simple black and white drawings by Mr. Barretto's wife, Ann, and the whole of the small book makes a strong appeal. Also it will "sell" Mexico to practically all the people who read it and thus hasten the ruin of another attractive place. Perhaps, though, "ruin" is too strong a word, particularly for Spanish countries; they can be spoiled for a little while during the fad, but the Landscaper's guess is that the change is only superficial and that once forgotten by the tourists, they will resume their pristine state.



And Alan Villiers has done another delightful book about the sea in *Last of the Windships* (Morrow, \$4), which has dozens of magnificent photographs of the sailing vessels left in the world today and a very fine and honestly sentimental introduction. Captain Villiers is at present on a round-the-world voyage in his square-rigger *Joseph Conrad*, one of the last ships left afloat that carry this beautiful rig.

### *French Democracy*

An unusually intelligent and well informed book on French politics of recent months is Alexander Werth's *France in Ferment* (Harpers, \$3), which reviews the situation leading up to the famous riots of February, 1934, and speculates upon the future of parliamentary government in one of the last three remaining democracies of the first order.

The whole effort to untangle the intricacies of a political set-up that Americans, used to the simple two-party system, are too likely to give up trying to comprehend, is admirable.

The Landscafer was curious to know what Mr. Werth had to say about the Next War, which all the prophets insist is approaching, but which does not seem

quite so imminent as this is being written as it did six months ago, although Japan's 1935 programme seems to be proceeding exactly according to forecast.

He says the French insist that it will be at least two years before the war starts, so we are welcome to that small consolation.

Ten distinguished women discuss the whole war question in *Why Wars Must Cease* (Macmillan, \$1), a small book published under the auspices of the National Committee on the Cause and Cure of War, and the only complaint the Landscafer has to make is that the book is far too logical and reasonable.

The reasons why wars must cease are completely convincing, and the figures appalling, such as the statement that all great nations are at present devoting between eighty and ninety per cent of their incomes to paying for past wars or preparing for future ones.

And however skeptical we may be of reason's part in controlling human affairs, there is every reason why the arguments should be presented as often and as well as possible. Dorothy Canfield Fisher's summing up of the arguments in the present volume is particularly fine.



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